

A winter landscape featuring snow-covered mountains in the background, a forest of bare trees in the middle ground, and a river flowing through a snowy field in the foreground. A semi-transparent red overlay covers the right side of the image, containing the title and authors.

A Ride for Everyone

Upper Skeena Community Transportation Strategy

April 5, 2019

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Acknowledgements

We would like to acknowledge and thank the community members of Upper Skeena who shared their time, stories, experiences, and ideas with us over the course of this project. We appreciate the warmth and openness that community members and organizations showed us during our visits to the communities.

We would particularly like to thank Dr. Peter Newbery and Sandra Harris for their dedication to this project and their partnership with the School of Community and Regional Planning (SCARP) for the past three years. We appreciate all the knowledge, time, and hospitality they provided to support our learning and our work. This project would not have been possible without them.

Thank you to SCARP studio instructors Clare Mochrie, Erick Villagomez, and Dan Ross who gave us guidance and invaluable feedback throughout the process. We want to extend a big thank you to Maged Senbel who experienced our wonderful visits of Upper Skeena with us, providing humour, support, and wisdom along the way.

We acknowledge that the project took place in Upper Skeena on the unceded territories of the Gitksan and Wet'suwet'en. The team also conducted work at UBC on the unceded territories of the Musqueam First Nation.

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Executive Summary

The Upper Skeena region faces significant transportation challenges related to geography, climate, and socio-economic conditions. The project objective was to create a **workable, creative, and community-backed transportation strategy for the Upper Skeena** to facilitate access to basic needs, employment, services, and socio-cultural events for the 13 communities in the region. This final report documents the project process, insights from community members heard during community engagements, and final recommendations.

During the first series of community engagements, community members shared their challenges, needs and ideas relating to transportation in Upper Skeena. Their challenges fall into three themes: 1) current bus schedules **do not allow for flexible mobility patterns** of community members; 2) transportation options are **not affordable** due to economic hardship in the region; and 3) there are **safety and accessibility concerns** regarding transportation options. Each of these challenges is worsened by a lack of clear communications about the different services in the region.

To address these challenges, the project team explored ideas for new and additional services that could help to fill the current transportation gaps: **on-demand services, adapting existing services, events-based shuttles and evening service**. When presented with these ideas, community members and local leaders indicated that a combination of these services, along with improved communications and coordination, would be more effective than implementing just one of these ideas.

Executive Summary

Based on themes that emerged from community, the project team identified five main goals that are important to consider for any new transportation system in Upper Skeena:

Coordination: Improved coordination connects community members to transportation services

Services: Services fill current transportation gaps and work together to get community members where they need to go

Scheduling: Community members are able to access transportation without concerns about cost

Payment: Community members are able to access transportation without concerns about cost

Governance: All communities are involved and have input in the oversight of the transportation system

The above goals informed a vision of what a community transportation strategy might look like. This report details specific recommendations for each of the goal areas that work together to support a better transportation system. These recommendations could be a starting point for an implementation plan for the community transportation strategy.



Project Overview

The following section provides an overview of the project for community members who may not wish to read the full report. It can serve as a standalone document, and highlights the main learnings and recommendations from the project.

Questions or thoughts? Contact the UBC team at usrc.transportation@gmail.com

A Ride for Everyone

Upper Skeena Community Transportation Strategy

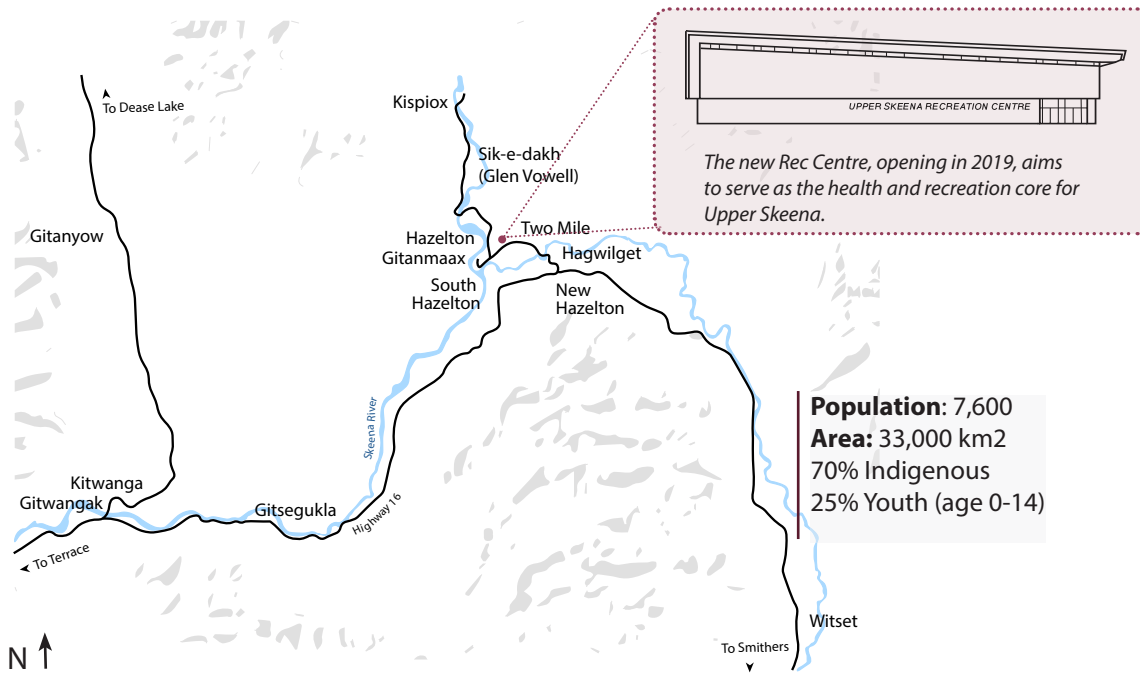
This project is a partnership between the School of Community and Regional Planning (SCARP) at UBC and the Upper Skeena Recreation Centre (USRC) Owners Partnership Committee (OPC). The Final Report documents our process throughout the project, what we heard from community members, and our recommendations for a community transportation strategy.

Our objective has been to **create a workable, creative, and community-backed transportation strategy for Upper Skeena.** This strategy will work to improve access to medical care, shopping, employment, and cultural events for the 13 communities in the region.



About the Project

The focus of this project is on the Upper Skeena area, including Gitxsan and Wet'suwet'en villages and the Hazeltons. The mountainous terrain, challenging road conditions during the winter, and long distances between communities contribute to transportation challenges and both geographic and social isolation.



Ongoing Safety Concerns

Highway 16, also known as the Highway of Tears, is the major road connection through Upper Skeena. It is along this road that many people, primarily young Indigenous women, have gone missing or been murdered. Many people resort to hitchhiking when they cannot afford to pay for transportation. Safety along the highway continues to be a major issue.

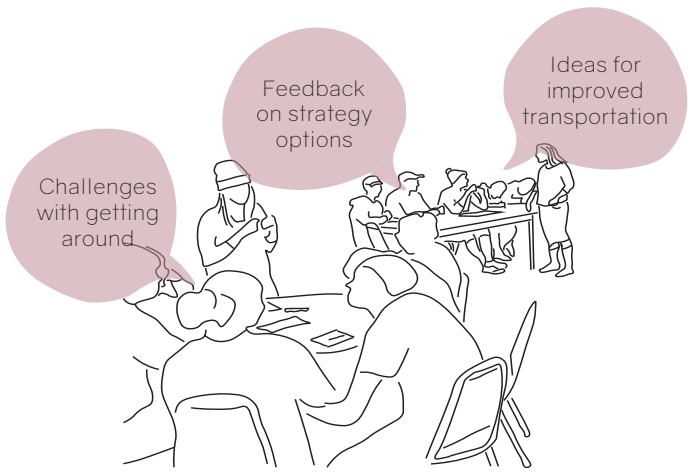


Strengthening Community Connections

Communities are interconnected through both interpersonal and historic ties as well as shared amenities, such as the secondary school located in Hazelton. Sports are especially important to community life and enable families and friends across generations to connect with one another. A central part of this project is ensuring that all community members are able to access not only important services and employment, but also cultural, social, and recreational events that strengthen community connection.

Hearing from Community

This project has included three community engagement visits to the region. While the transportation strategy will affect all community members, we have emphasized input from **youth, elders, those with mobility challenges, and low income residents without access to a personal vehicle.**



Who we heard from

235 Elders and High School Students

33 Community leaders and organization representatives

143 Responses from two surveys



Transportation Challenges

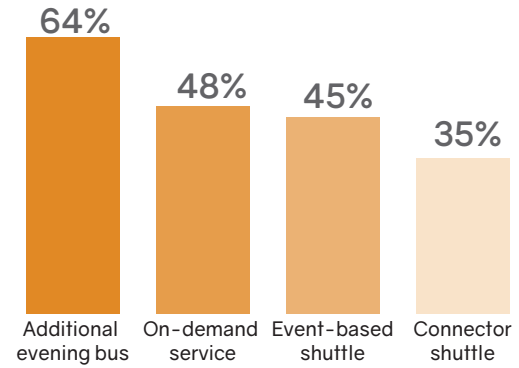
Key transportation challenges that community members face generally fall into three categories. Each of these challenges is made worse by a **lack of clear communication** about options.

1. The bus schedules don't allow for the **flexible** mobility patterns of community members.
2. Transportation options are not **affordable**.
3. There are **safety and accessibility** concerns regarding transportation options.

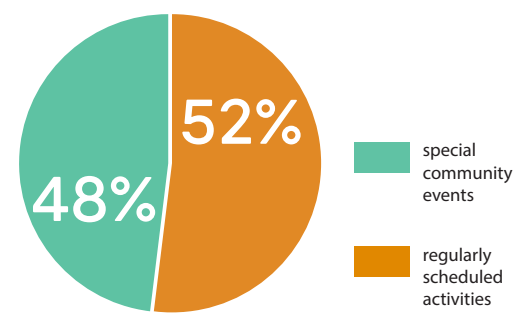
Community Priorities

During our second visit, community members provided feedback on potential service options and preferences. Based on our meetings and online survey, we heard that a **combined service** will best meet community members' diverse needs.

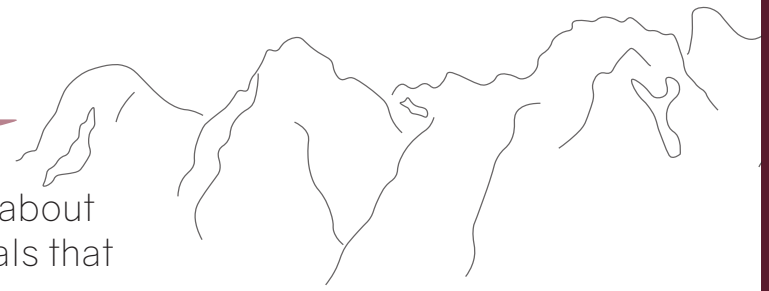
An evening service is a top priority, but many services would be useful to community members.



Special events and regular activities are both very important to community life.



Transportation Goals: Where are we going?



Community members have raised five areas repeatedly when talking about improving transportation. These areas were used create strategic goals that provide direction for a community transportation system.

Goals for Better Transportation

Coordination
Improved coordination **connects community members** to transportation services

Governance
All communities are **involved and have input** in the oversight of the transportation system



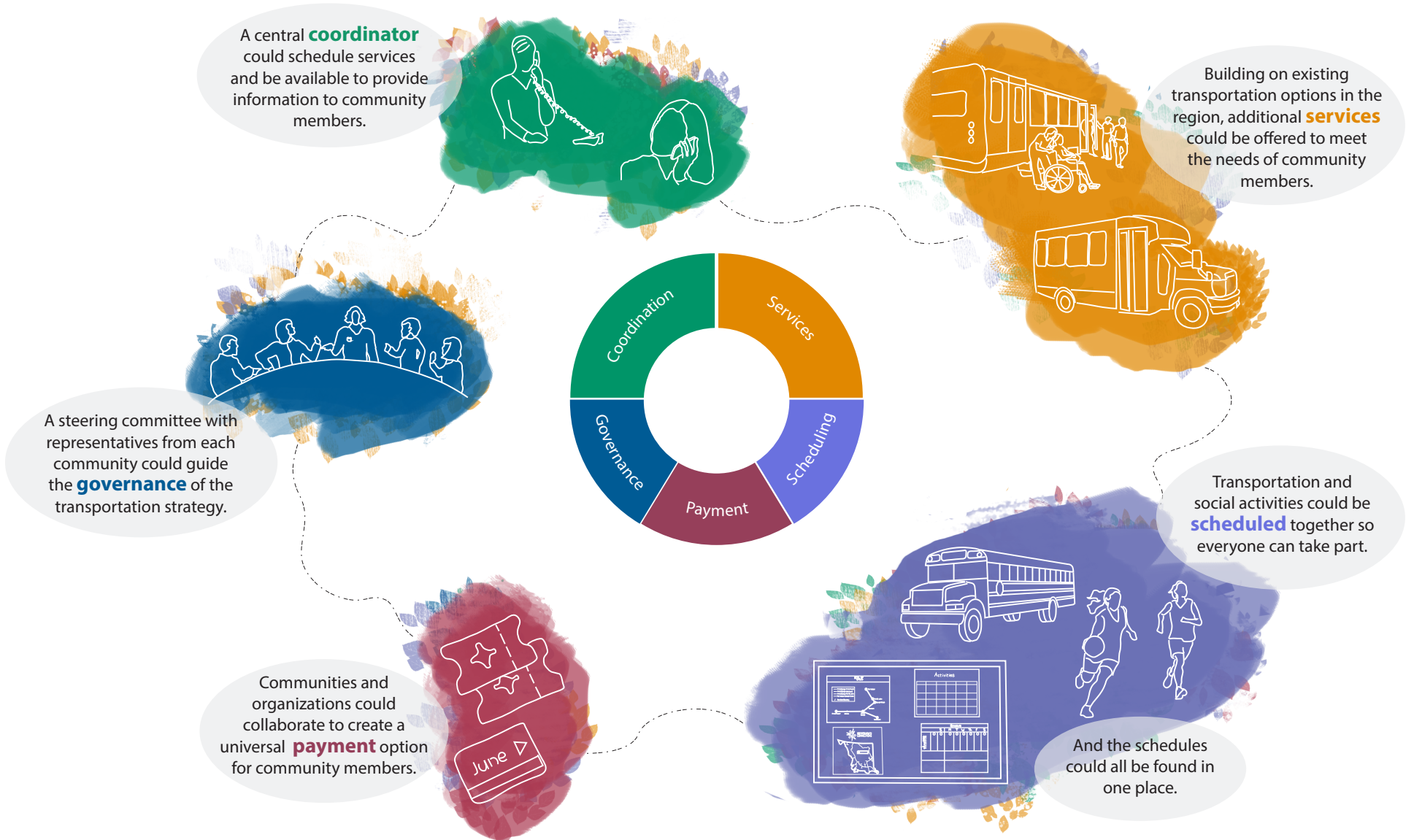
Services
Services **fill current transportation gaps** and work together to get community members where they need to go

Scheduling
Schedules are **easy to find and read**, and they **align with community events** and activities

Payment
Community members are able to access transportation **without concerns about cost**

Envisioning a Transportation Strategy

What might an Upper Skeena community transportation strategy look like? The vision below outlines how the five strategic goals might look when put together. Recommendations within each goal area are found in the full report.





Understanding the Context

About the Project

The Upper Skeena region faces significant transportation challenges related to geography, climate, and socio-economic conditions. The objective of this project has been to **create a workable, creative, and community-backed transportation strategy for Upper Skeena**. This strategy will work to facilitate access to medical care, commercial activity centres, employment, and socio-cultural events for the 13 geographically dispersed communities in the region.

To inform the strategy, this project has included three community engagement visits to the region. These visits have focused on engaging with both community members and representatives of Indigenous governments, municipalities, and local organizations. While the transportation strategy will affect all community members, we have emphasized input from **youth, Elders, those with mobility challenges, and low income residents without access to a personal vehicle**.

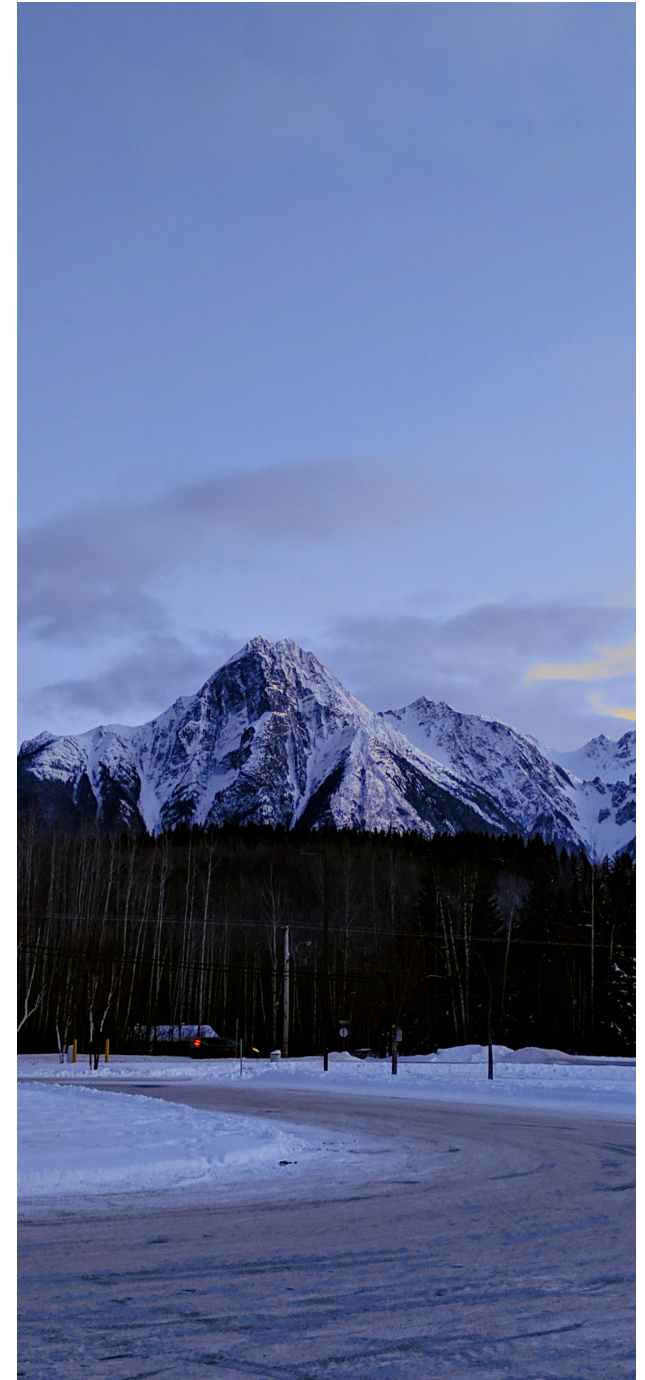
About the partnership

The Upper Skeena Community Transportation Strategy represents the fourth partnership between the School of Community and Regional Planning (SCARP) at the University of British Columbia (UBC) and the Upper Skeena Recreation Centre (USRC) Owners Partnership Committee (OPC). The OPC is a unique collaboration between Gitksan and Wet'suwet'en hereditary and elected chiefs, the Regional District, community leaders, and local governments. The nearly completed USRC aims to serve as the health and recreation core for the Upper Skeena region. In working towards this goal, the OPC has identified the need to ensure that residents from all communities in the region are able to access not only USRC programming, but also medical, employment, and social opportunities that are taken for granted in urbanized settings.

*The Upper Skeena Community Transportation Strategy was developed over the course of five project phases outlined in *Our Approaches* (page 10). This report summarizes: the issues community members brought forward during engagements; research on rural community transportation systems; and recommendations on how to implement the community transportation strategy.*

At the time of writing, the project team still has one final visit to Upper Skeena to be completed in April 2019. During this final visit, the team will present the findings of this report to community members.

*More information about the project team can be found in *About the Team* (page 37).*



About Upper Skeena

The geographic scope of the project covers the traditional territories of the Gitksan and Wet'suwet'en, as well as the Hazelton communities of the Upper Skeena. Travel between the two furthest communities, Gitanyow and Witset, spans approximately 110 kilometres. The mountainous terrain, challenging road conditions during the winter, and vast distances between communities contribute to both geographic and social isolation.

Highway 16, also known as the Highway of Tears, is the major road connection through Upper Skeena. It is along this road that many people, primarily young Indigenous women, have gone missing or been murdered. Given that this region is considered the highest for economic hardship in the province, many people resort to hitchhiking when they cannot afford to pay for transportation. These economic circumstances mean safety along the highway continues to be a pressing issue.

Despite these challenges, the communities are interconnected through both interpersonal and historic ties as well as shared amenities, such as the secondary school located in Hazelton. Sports are especially important to community life and enable families and friends across generations to connect with one another.

A central part of this project is ensuring that all community members are able to access not only important services and employment, but also cultural, social, and recreational events that strengthen community connection.



About Upper Skeena

Map of Project Area

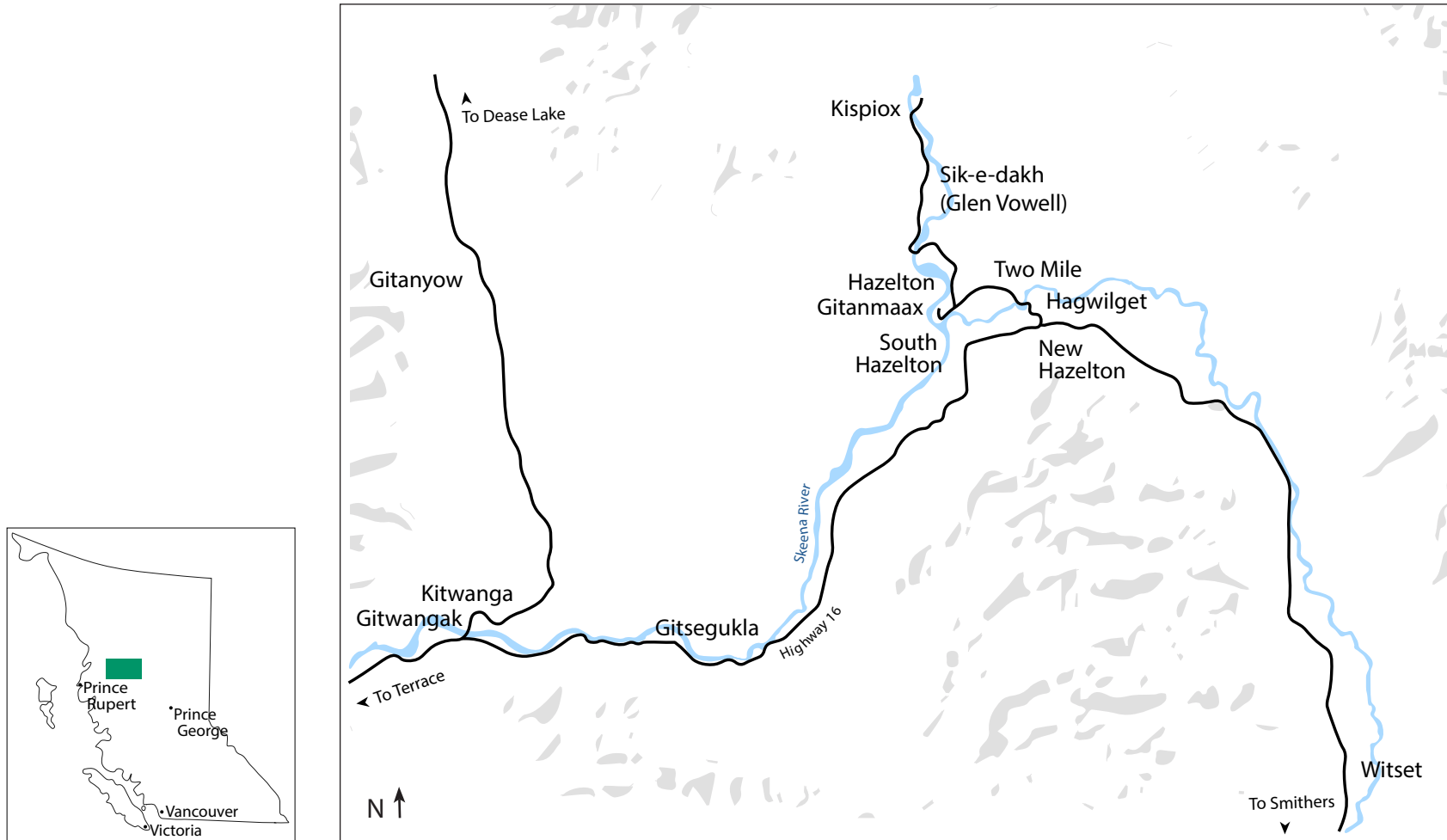


Figure 1: Map on left: Context map of BC with project area highlighted. Map on right: Project area showing communities and main roads.

About Upper Skeena

Aerial View of Project Area

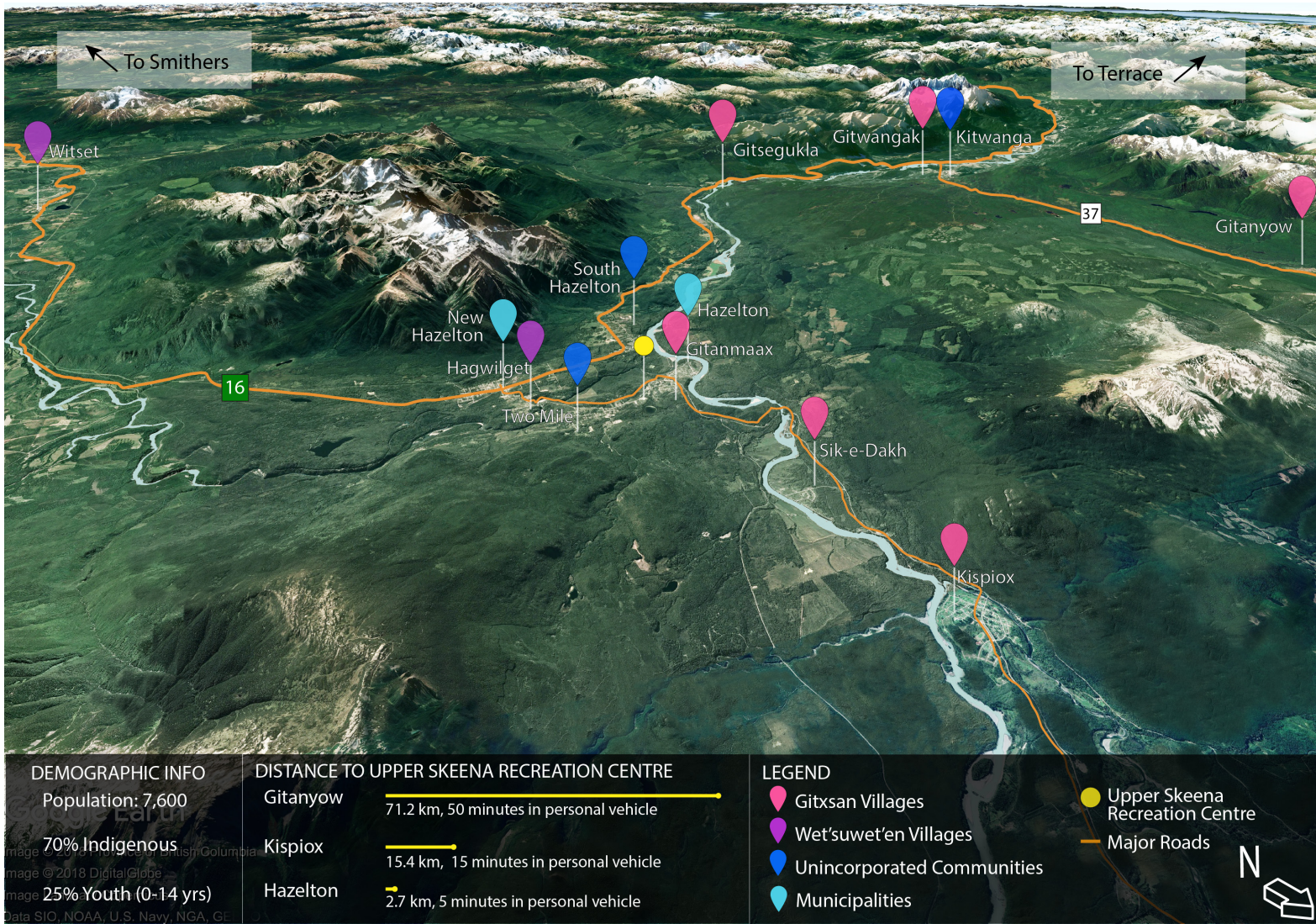


Figure 2: Aerial view of project area showing showing communities and main roads on the topographic background. Orientation is rotated to see the mountainous terrain of the region. Source map from Google Earth, with additional layers by UBC Student Team. For complete data on distances to Upper Skeena Recreation Centre, please see Appendix A.

Current Transportation

While there are a number of transportation options that currently exist, these services operate independently of one another. There is a lack of coordination between them and it can be difficult to find information about each option.

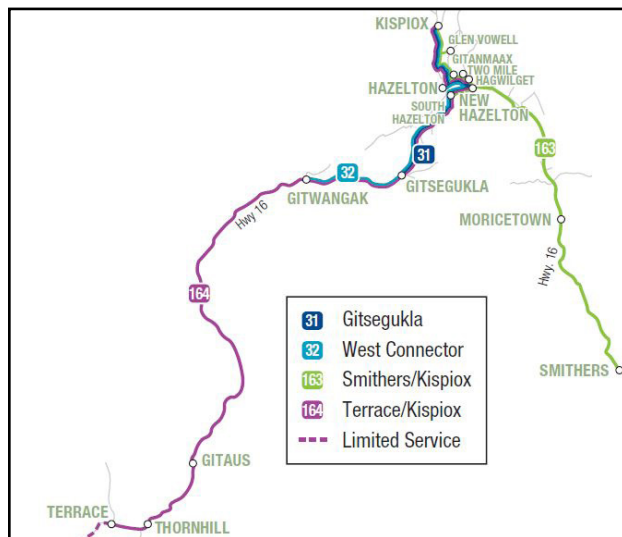


Figure 3: Current BC Transit Bus Route Map. Source: BC Transit (2018).

Bus

Each bus service in the area is operated independently of the others, and information about schedules is not currently combined.

BC Transit serves Upper Skeena with four fixed routes that run on alternate days. No routes reach Gitanyow. These four routes represent an increase in transit services as of November 2017 (Highway 16 Action Plan).

School buses to elementary and high schools are funded by the Coast Mountain School District (or the Bulkley Valley School District in the case of Witset). The school boards contract third parties to provide transportation. In the case of Hazelton Secondary School and the elementary schools, the buses are scheduled to pick students up in the morning and then drop them off immediately after school.

BC Bus North runs regional and long-haul bus routes between Prince Rupert, Smithers, Prince George and beyond. This service is funded by the Province of British Columbia on a pilot basis and is being operated Pacific Western Transportation.

Northern Health Connections is a bus service run by the Northern Health Authority with the purpose of providing affordable travel service to those needing to reach out-of-town medical appointments. These buses

run throughout Northern BC and to Vancouver. Those with mobility challenges and those over 60 are also eligible to use this service.

Shuttles

Many communities operate **community shuttles** to events and services in the area. However, the Bands have different funding and not all communities have regular shuttle runs. Some are only used for major events. Some communities have vehicles from previous funding opportunities but they are not running due to lack of funds available for operations.

One of the most used shuttles is the **Gitanmaax Health Shuttle**, which is operated by the Gitanmaax Health and Wellness Centre and provides rides to community members, such as to Elders for the weekly Gitanmaax Elders' Walking Club.

Previous Forms of Transportation

Before paved roads and highways were built in the Upper Skeena, people moved around by river and trails. Grease trails and waterways throughout the region were used for travel and trade between communities.

Current Transportation

Driving

Personal vehicles are one of the main modes of transportation in Upper Skeena. However, many people in this region do not have drivers' licences, and some resort to illegal driving. Cars and fuel can also be prohibitively expensive.

Informal Modes

Informal ridesharing is common in Upper Skeena. Community members call friends, family, neighbours or use the internet to find rides to other towns, events or appointments.

Hitchhiking is often the only option for community members who may walk partway to a destination and look for drivers or vehicles to get a ride the rest of the way. There are significant safety concerns with this mode.

Walking & Cycling

Many residents walk and/or cycle to get around in their communities. Walking and cycling are sometimes used to get between communities, although the distances and conditions of roads can be a barrier.

A partnership between a few communities has led to the development of a **walking trail** that runs from Old Hazelton to New Hazelton through Gitanmaax, Two Mile and Hagwilget. The goal was to make walking between communities easier and safer. In most places the path is set apart from the road and maintains a varying width. There is no specific lighting infrastructure for the walking trail, so it is dark in areas further away from residences. Additionally, while it is cleared in the winter, it is not ploughed well enough to be usable by those with mobility challenges.



Jurisdiction & Regulations

A new transportation strategy cannot be developed for the area without consideration for governance of the land and legal constraints. What we currently call Upper Skeena is situated on the unceded, traditional territories of the Gitksan and the Wet'suwet'en, which have long-standing governance with hereditary chiefs. The area also has community-based governance, including Band Councils, the Regional District, and local municipalities.

Band Chief and Council

Band Chiefs and Councils govern reserves, which fall under the federal government's jurisdiction. Gitksan Bands in the region are Gitanyow, Gitwangak, Gitsegukla, Gitanmaax, Glen Vowell (Sik-e-Dakh), and Kispiox. Wet'suwet'en Bands in the region are Hagwilget and Witset.

Off-reserve

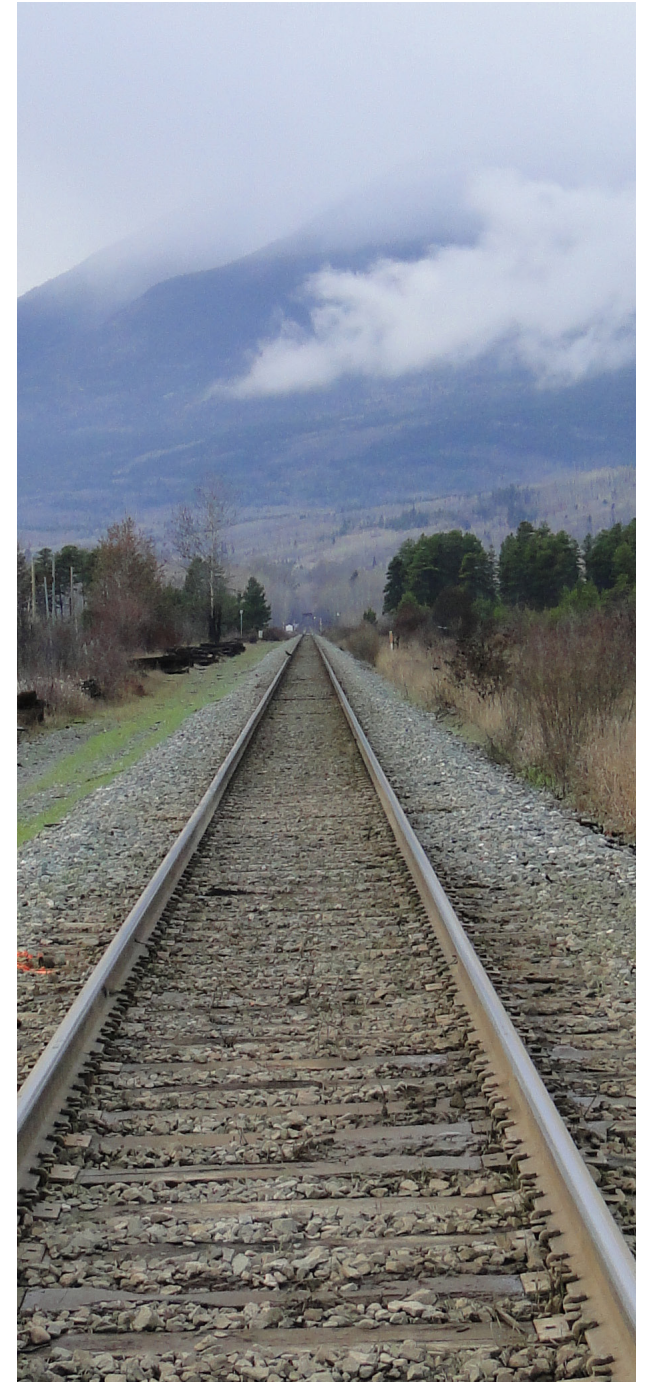
The jurisdiction of off-reserve land comes from the provincial government and is delegated to municipalities and regional districts. The Village of Hazelton and the District of New Hazelton are municipalities, and other areas of the region are for the most part served by elected representatives to the Regional District of Kitimat-Stikine. Witset is located in the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako.

Transportation Regulation

There are several pieces of legislation that set out transportation laws and regulatory frameworks in British Columbia. While the Province of British Columbia does not have jurisdiction on reserves, any transportation system in Upper Skeena would be operating both on and off reserve and would therefore need to comply with transportation requirements set forth by the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure.

A Collaborative Model

The Owners Partnership Committee of the Upper Skeena Recreation Centre, for whom this report is directed, has a unique governance model composed of Gitksan and Wet'suwet'en hereditary and elected chiefs, representatives from local municipalities and the Regional District of Kitimat-Stikine, and local community leaders. This existing spirit of collaboration will aid in implementing and securing funding for a strategy that meets the needs of all residents.



Jurisdiction & Regulations

Regulations for paying for rides

When establishing a transportation system, it is important to consider whether drivers are volunteering or profiting from the arrangement. A **commercial passenger vehicle** is any vehicle that is being used to transport a passenger for profit. This vehicle would need to have a commercial passenger vehicle license and drivers would need a Class 4 driver's license.

Drivers providing commercial transportation in their personal vehicles without obtaining a licence could be subject to fines of \$1,150.

Carpooling does not require a licence. Getting passengers to pay a share of gas and wear-and-tear of a vehicle is not considered to be turning a profit, and any driver with a Class 5 licence can provide carpooling.

Class 5 is the regular passenger vehicle class for driving. Compared to a Class 5 licence, a Class 4 licence requires pre-screening of driving record, driver fitness medical examinations, additional knowledge and road tests, and a vehicle safety pre-trip test.

Applying for a commercial passenger vehicle license

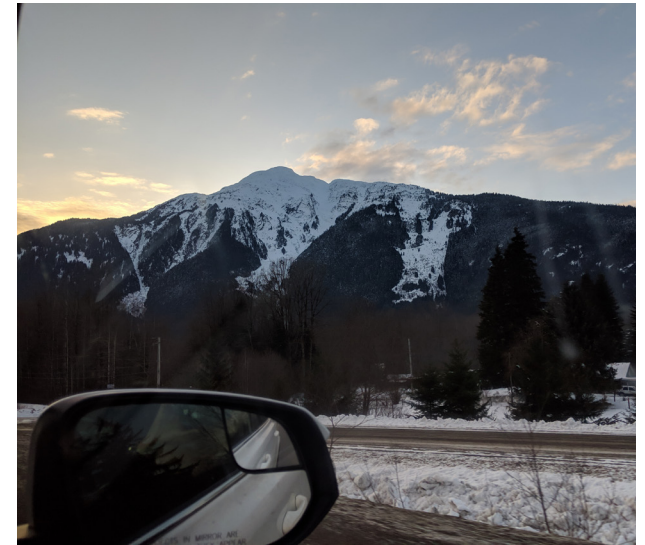
Applications for licences for commercial ground transportation can be made through the Passenger Transportation Branch Registrar's website. There is a simplified application process for inter-city buses.

Any service provider would also need to apply for insurance that applies to their services.

Ride-Sharing and Future Requirements

As community members expressed interest in ride-sharing and creating an Uber-like service for Upper Skeena, the upcoming changes to passenger transportation legislation are particularly relevant. As of April 2019, the Province of British Columbia is reviewing legislative and regulatory frameworks to be more adaptable to new transportation services.

At the time of writing this report, there is a debate about whether or not commercial passenger drivers should be required to have a Class 4 licence or if Class 5 is adequate. In developing a new transportation system, the community will need to keep an eye out for updates to legislation and regulatory frameworks, as well as updated insurance policies by the Insurance Corporation of British Columbia (ICBC).



Relevant Legislation

The following provincial acts have set the legal framework for transportation in British Columbia.

- *Passenger Transportation Act* - sets forth the requirement for those operating commercial passenger vehicles to obtain a licence from the Registrar of the Passenger Transportation Branch.
- *Commercial Transport Act* - requires vehicles to meet safety standards.
- *Insurance (Vehicle) Act* - requires vehicle owners to purchase insurance specific to the activities for which their vehicle is used.
- *Motor Vehicle Act* - defines requirements for various classes of vehicles.
- *British Columbia Transit Act* - establishes BC Transit as a crown corporation and defines its authority to generate revenue and develop funding agreements.

Our Approach

Our project methodology integrates community engagement, case study research, and observations during our three visits to the region. Our research focus and engagement approaches were tailored to reflect the objectives of each of the project phases, as outlined below. For additional details on our activities and engagements, see *Appendix B and C*.

Phase 1: Scoping and background research

Phase 2: Initial engagement on challenges, needs and assets

Phase 3: Development of ideas for transportation options

Phase 4: Engagement for feedback on transportation options

Phase 5: Final recommendations and engagement

Visit 3
Forthcoming
(April 2019)

Visit 1

Elders' Lunch:
30 Elders

High School Class:
25 youth

One-on-one meetings:
2 staff/elected officials
Informal conversations

Written Feedback:
11 surveys

Visit 2

Elders' Lunch:
65 Elders

High School:
18 youth (activity)
115 youth (presentation)

One-on-one meetings:
4 band leaders/staff
4 community/government organization staff
Informal conversations

Group conversations:
11 community association members
12 community leaders, teachers, coaches

Written Feedback:
132 questionnaire responses

Our Approach

Guiding Principles

Recognizing that our project team is an outside student group with no lived experience in the communities of Upper Skeena, we wanted to ensure that we maintained an awareness and respect for the communities and anyone we worked with throughout the project. Toward the beginning of our project we created a few guiding principles for our work: remain adaptable in our approach to fit community needs; respect the knowledge, expertise and experience held by community members and stakeholders; and focus on listening and treating every moment of this project as an opportunity to learn from others.

Project Limitations

Due to the time and resource constraints of our project, we would like to recognize that there are a number of limitations surrounding our efforts. Our project has prioritized those in greatest need of transportation, including youth, elders, those with limited mobility, and those without access to a personal vehicle. During our engagement visits we have aimed to meet with community members and leaders who could best provide insight into these needs, but we have sometimes been limited by who we are connected with and who is available to meet. In particular, although we met with targeted groups of high school students and Gitanmaax Elders, we did not have the opportunity to host public-facing community-specific engagement events. Youth and Elders are therefore overrepresented in our questionnaire responses and engagement data. Weather conditions, other events, and unanticipated community circumstances have also at times made it difficult to fulfill our intended engagement objectives.





Hearing from Community

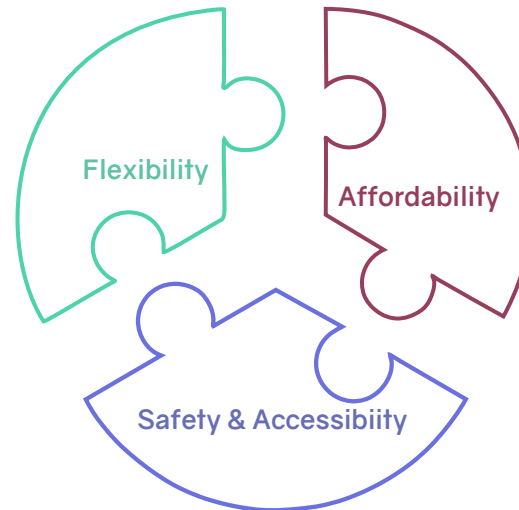
Key Challenges

Throughout our engagements, we have identified three main challenges community members face when trying to access transportation.

The bus schedules don't meet the **flexibility** needs of community members: they do not align with residents' mobility patterns.

- Infrequent buses (see *Appendix D* for more details on current bus schedules)
- Difficulty reaching larger towns (e.g. Smithers and Terrace)
- Community events are hard to access
- Limited service to Gitanyow
- Limited school bus runs

"The buses don't come when I need them."
-Community member



Transportation options are not **affordable** due to economic hardship in the region.

- Variable ride prices
- High gas prices
- Unaffordable fare prices
- Challenging socioeconomic context

"I see more people at the end of the month when the social assistance cheques come in."
-Bus driver

There are **safety and accessibility** concerns regarding transportation options.

- Dangerous road and weather conditions
- Inaccessible bus stops
- Limited space accommodation on buses
- Aging population
- Unsafe alternatives (e.g. hitchhiking, illegal driving)

"It's very difficult to get to the bus in a wheelchair." - Elder

Communications

Since all of the current services are independently operated, each of the above issues is worsened by a **lack of clear communication** about schedules, cost, and accessibility. Addressing the current communications gaps is an important part of our recommendations and incorporated within our proposed options for a new service.

Initial Ideas for Feedback

After hearing about current challenges for communities across Upper Skeena, we developed initial transportation service ideas. These ideas were based on suggestions we heard from community members, as well as approaches taken by other small towns and rural regions across Canada facing similar transportation challenges (see **Appendix E** for case studies). From this engagement and research, we identified **four main ideas for new or additional transportation services**. These ideas were not meant to be stand-alone; a transportation system would include aspects of at least a few of these **ideas combined**.

The following pages outline the ideas presented to community members during our second visit and how community members responded to them.



Initial Ideas for Feedback



On-Demand Service

On-demand transportation (also referred to as demand-responsive) is being adopted by small, rural, and remote communities where it is too expensive to operate multiple fixed route buses (such as what BC Transit currently offers).

What could this look like?

Vehicles would pick people up on an as-needed basis. Community members would need to book a ride in advance. This service could be door-to-door or from walkable pick-up stops. It could be operated with existing vehicles in communities or there could be a new company-owned vehicle.



Event-Based Shuttles

Since special events such as cultural activities (e.g. berry-picking, feasts), sports games, and group outings (e.g. Christmas shopping) are important for maintaining social connection between the communities, this concept focuses on transportation for community members to reach these events.

What could this look like?

A vehicle would bring community members to and from special events (e.g. community feasts, sports tournaments) and/or regular, recurring activities (e.g. weekly walking group, monthly shopping trips). Costs for the shuttle could be shared between multiple communities depending on who is picked up along the way.



Additional Evening Bus

We heard from youth and elders that finding a ride home in the evening is a challenge. To build upon existing services, this concept focuses on the expansion of service into the evening to meet community members' needs and lifestyles.

What could this look like?

An extra school bus or shuttle would run from Hazelton Secondary School and the new rec centre to all communities on weekday evenings a few hours after school ends to give students and community members time to participate in activities and sports.



Connector Shuttle Routes

This concept builds upon what already exists in the community. A connector shuttle service could travel a number of targeted routes, both between communities, and connecting underserved communities to the existing BC Transit routes.

What could this look like?

A shuttle would connect Gitanyow, Kispiox & Glen Vowell to BC Transit routes on Highway 16. Another option could add a route between the Hazeltons (South Hazelton, New Town, Old Town, Gitanmaax, Hagwilget, Two Mile).

Transportation Preferences

We brought the initial concepts we developed back to community members to learn about their preferences and attitudes toward these ideas. Participants indicated their preferences for particular **service, communications, and payment options**. They were also asked to choose their preference between certain **trade-offs** of a transportation system. No transportation service can meet every need - for instance, a multi-passengerservice cannot be both fast and provide door-to-door service. It is therefore important to have realistic discussions about the potential compromises of each option. Complete survey data is presented in *Appendix F*.



Transportation Preferences

About Survey Respondents

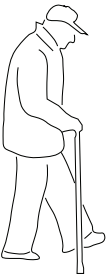
A total of 132 individuals participated in our feedback survey. Survey participants represent a wide range of communities in the region. Many responses came from Gitanmaax, New Hazelton, Hazelton, Gitsegukla, Gitanyow and Kitwanga. The majority of participants were youth, owing to our engagement activities with high school students at Hazelton Secondary School during our second visit.



69%
youth
(13-19)

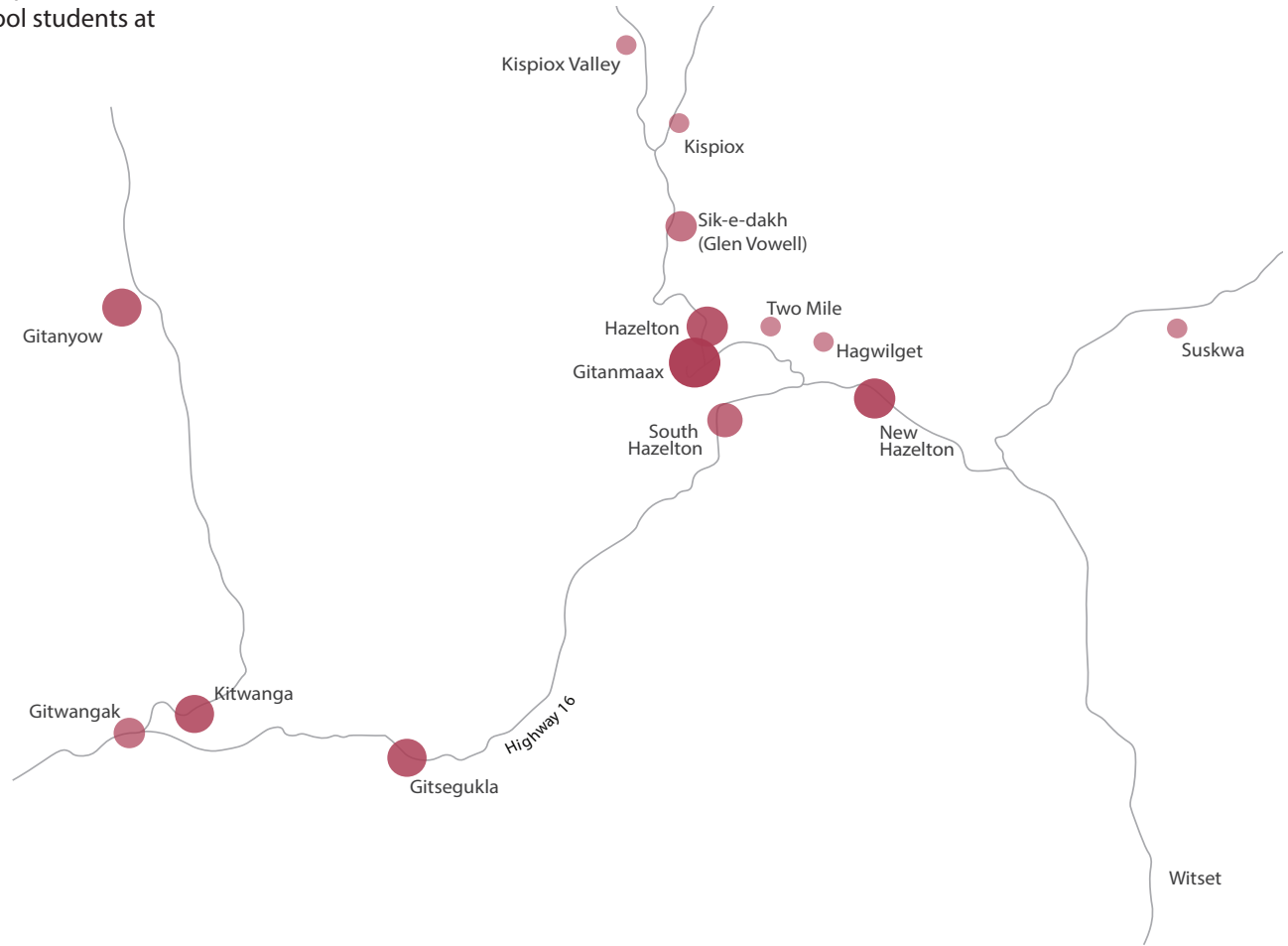


17%
adults
(20-64)



10%
seniors
(64+)

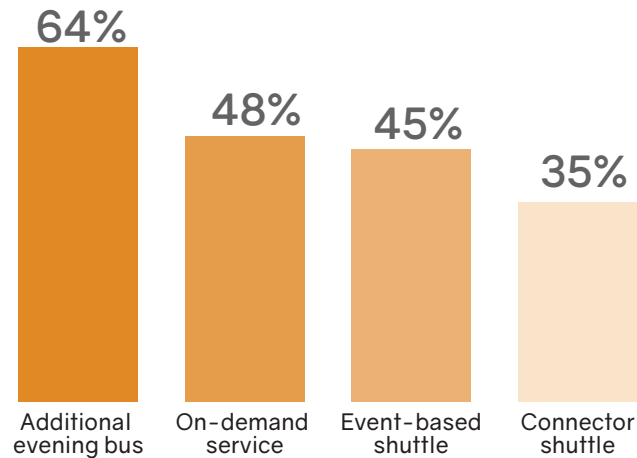
4%
not
indicated



Transportation Preferences

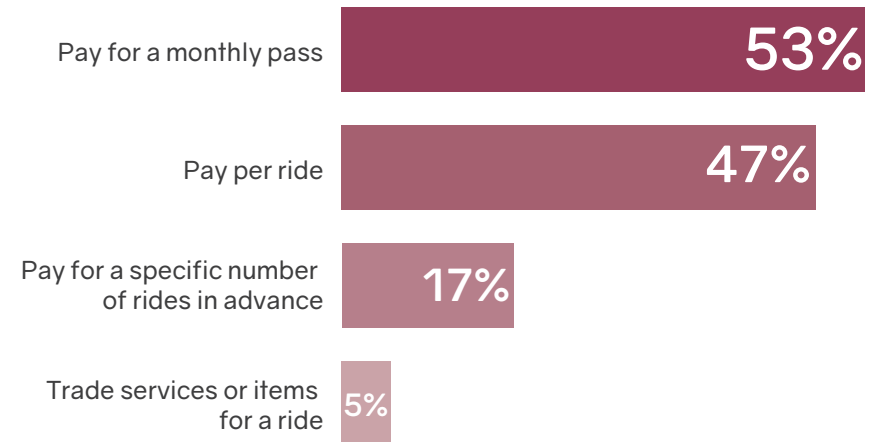
New Service Preferences

Respondents selected their **top two** preferences for a potential new service. An **additional evening school bus** was ranked highest. On-demand service and an events-based shuttle were also preferred.



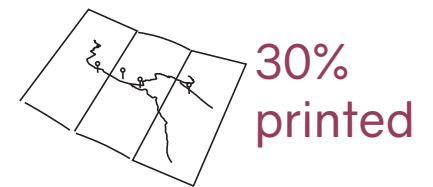
Payment Preferences

In the survey we asked individuals to select all methods of payments they would most likely use. The majority of respondents would prefer to use a **monthly pass** or to pay per ride.



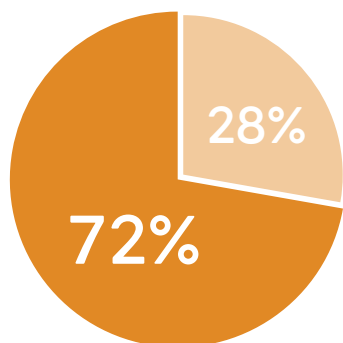
Communications

Respondents selected their **top two** preferences for how they would like to find out information about transportation services. **Text** and **phone** were the most frequently selected, followed by online and printed.

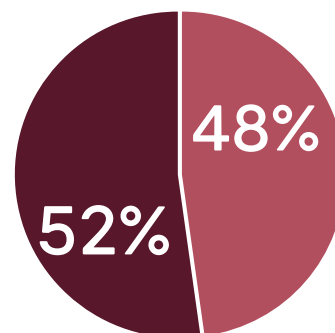


Transportation Preferences

Transportation Service Trade-offs



The majority of survey respondents would prefer a service that **serves more people at specific times** (i.e. scheduled service) rather than a service that offers rides to fewer people exactly when they need it (i.e. on-demand).



When asked to indicate their preference between having better access to either regularly scheduled activities or to special community events, respondents indicated that **both options were almost equally important.**

Key Learnings from Feedback

The following learnings from community feedback have especially served to inform our approach to developing recommendations for a transportation strategy:

- Given the relatively even ranking of service options (see page 18), **no single service will meet the diverse needs and preferences** of community members.
- The even split between regularly scheduled activities and special community events highlight the **importance of both kinds of activities to community members**, and therefore any new proposed strategy should account for the balance of these two values.



Developing a Transportation Strategy

Envisioning Better Transportation

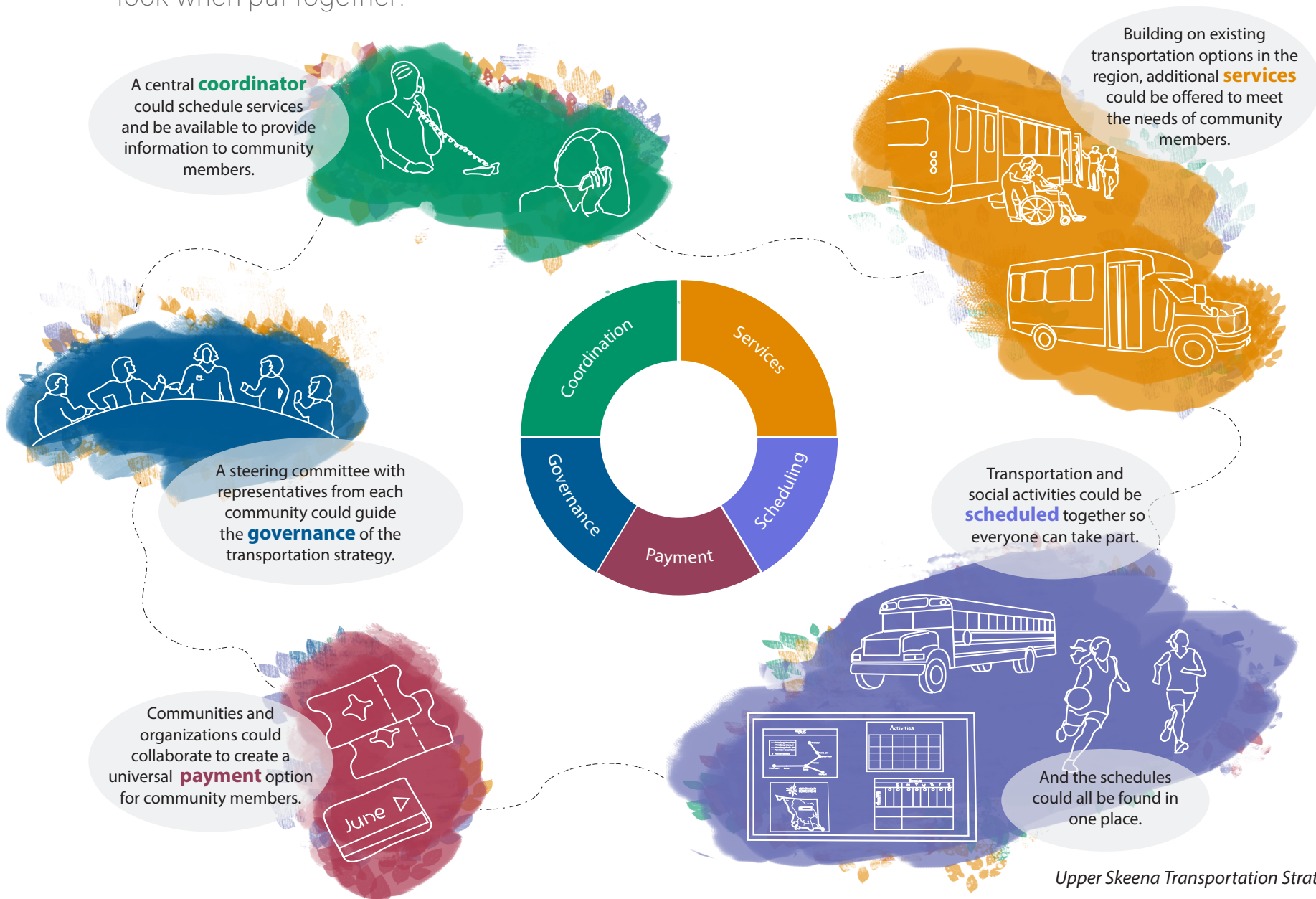
The following five priority areas came up repeatedly when talking to community members about transportation. We have used these areas to create a list of strategic goals that provide direction for the proposed transportation strategy. Coordination and service goals form the foundation of our vision for a new strategy, and are complemented by goals related to governance, scheduling and payment. This section includes a vision of what a transportation strategy could look like and details the specific recommendations related to each goal area to offer possible ways forward.

Goals for Better Transportation



Envisioning Better Transportation

What might an Upper Skeena community transportation look like? The vision below outlines how the five strategic goals might look when put together.



Coordination



1. Hire a **central transportation coordinator** (or full-time equivalent).



Why is this important?

Community members find it difficult to access information about transportation options and schedules. Right now there is limited coordination between services and many people we spoke to expressed an interest in a central phone line.

What could this look like?

Community members could call or email the coordinator to ask for transportation information. The coordinator could also act as a central dispatch for services. This person could focus on collaborating with leaders and transportation providers; coordinating a common payment method; and connecting with BC Transit.

Who could be involved?

Owners Partnership Committee

Steering committee to hire a coordinator and provide ongoing direction (see recommendation on Governance)

Relevant case studies (Appendix E):

- Northumberland Community Care Shuttle, ON
- Salaberry-de-Valleyview TaxiBus, QC
- Hinton Transit and Freedom Express, AB

Further Considerations

See *Appendix G, H, and I* for further tips for the coordinator position, as well as recommendations related to the rec centre and BC Transit.

Coordination



2. Support **small collaborative partnerships** for services.



Why is this important?

Rather than having a region-wide collaboration on one shuttle bus or route, community leaders indicated that it can be more effective for two or three nearby communities to collaborate on a service for a smaller geographic area.

What could this look like?

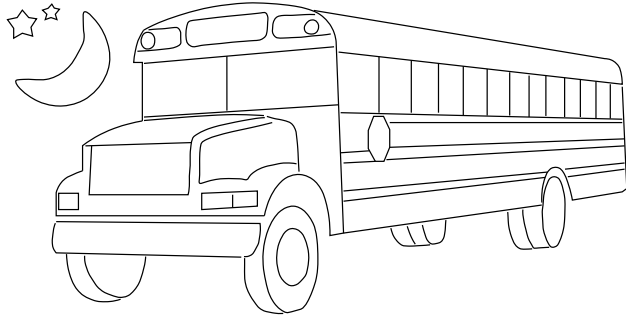
Partnerships might involve a shuttle running between two or three communities on a regular basis, or a few communities combining resources to send a few shuttles out to a large community event. To avoid services that don't fit together, these should be integrated with other existing options and the schedule should be available to the central coordinator.

Who could be involved?

- Band transportation coordinators
- Band governance
- Proposed transportation coordinator



1. Add an **evening school bus run.**



Why is this important?

Among our survey respondents, evening service was ranked most important. High school students expressed the importance of an additional evening bus run so they can participate in more in activities, both at the rec centre and the high school, and be able to get home. An evening service is also needed for elementary schools to get to the rec centre and to get home.

What could this look like?

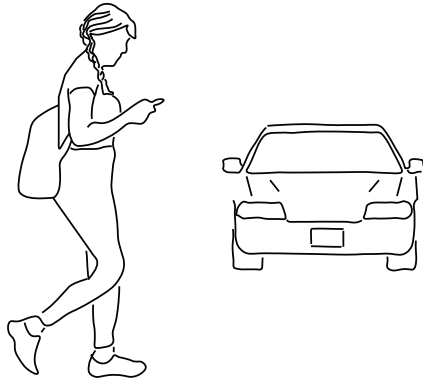
This service would be similar to the morning school bus run to the high school. It would be run through the Coast Mountain School District and their contractor, Diversified. The timing of the bus run would be based on the end of most or all activities at the high school and the rec centre. The student service could be integrated with an adult service for individuals who are either going to attend youth sporting events or to use the rec centre themselves. The Coast Mountain School District is currently exploring the ability to offer a third daily bus route.

Who could be involved?

- Upper Skeena Recreation Centre
- Coaches and activity programmers
- Proposed transportation coordinator
- Coast Mountain School District
- Hazelton Secondary School



2. Facilitate a **bookable ridesharing system**.



Why is this important?

Many community members offer rides to their neighbours and friends but would be interested in offering more rides to other community members when they can. Getting rides to appointments and into shopping areas is important for many community members who cannot catch a bus or other transportation.

What could this look like?

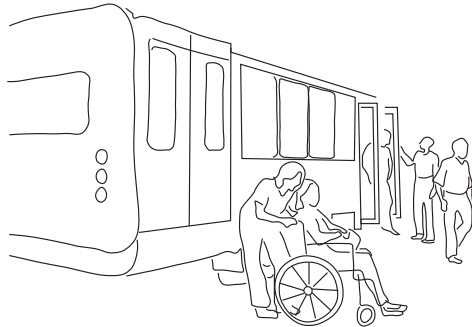
Community members who drive could call the transportation coordinator to tell them where and when they would be able to offer rides. The transportation coordinator would have an ongoing list of offers and requests, so those who need rides could call in and ask if anyone is offering rides in their area.

Who could be involved?

- Proposed transportation coordinator
- Community members



3. Create a **combined service** with a community-owned vehicle for events, regular activities and rides as needed.



Why is this important?

Community members expressed interest in a combination of transportation services to fill remaining gaps in the region. Additionally, survey respondents were nearly evenly divided on their preferences for better access to weekly recurring activities and for better access to special community events. This split shows the importance of both forms of social gathering in Upper Skeena.

What could this look like?

To make sure community members can get to regular activities and special events, we recommend transportation services that are flexible. There could be on-demand transportation bringing people to appointments, while fixed routes could be scheduled for specific activities and events. Services could pick riders up at preset meeting places (as well as door-to-door pickups for those with mobility challenges).

Who could be involved?

- Proposed transportation coordinator
- Band managers
- Activities organizers/programmers

Relevant case studies (Appendix E):

- Northumberland Community Care Shuttle, ON
- Hinton Transit and Freedom Express, AB

Scheduling



1. **Align** transportation service schedules to activities.



Why is this important?

Students, coaches and community members said the current transportation schedules do not align well with activities happening at the high school. With the addition of activities at the rec centre, it is important for community members of all ages to be able to reach programs and events.

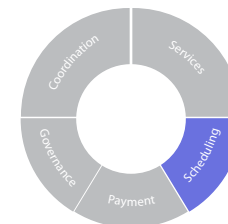
What could this look like?

Any new service or schedule should align with the activities and programs happening at the rec centre and the high school. Activity coordinators could consider the regular schedule of high school/elementary school after-school activities and rec centre activities. The transportation coordinator would then make sure the transportation services have scheduled rides immediately following activities.

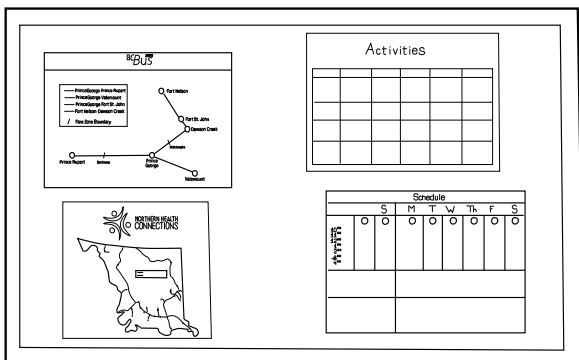
Who could be involved?

- Rec centre activities programmer
- Proposed transportation coordinator
- High school activities coordinator/coaches

Scheduling



- 2. **Combine all schedules** so they can be found and viewed in one place.



Why is this important?

Community members said it was difficult to know what the options were for transportation in the area. There are multiple services but currently there is no central place where people can look at all the schedules together. Community organizations were interested in having better access to schedules to provide their clients with updated transportation options.

What could this look like?

All transportation service schedules could be put together in an easy to read document for print, to post online and for the transportation coordinator to refer to.

There could also be a central activities schedule that includes activities from all communities in Upper Skeena. By listing activity and transportation schedules together, community members can better plan their transportation.

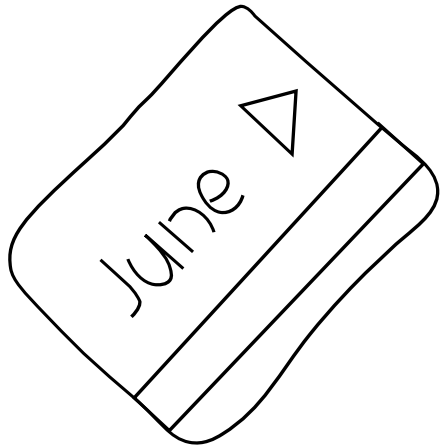
Who could be involved?

- Proposed transportation coordinator
- Activity coordinators in each community

Payment



1. Create a **common payment method** for transportation services.



Why is this important?

We heard from community members and community organizations that it would be convenient to have tickets or a monthly pass that could be used on any local transportation service. It might also minimize uncomfortable negotiations about ride prices between community members.

What could this look like?

Community organizations could purchase or be given blocks of tickets for a new service to give out to clients and people who would not otherwise be able to afford a ride.

Who could be involved?

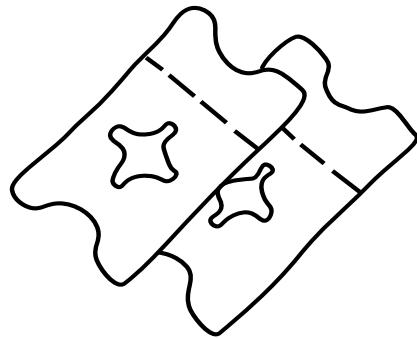
Proposed transportation coordinator
BC Transit

Relevant case studies (Appendix E):

- Northumberland Community Care Shuttle, ON



2. Partner with **community organizations** who are willing to subsidize transportation for community members.



Why is this important?

Some organizations in Upper Skeena purchase tickets from BC Transit to provide clients a way to get home or to appointments. This both helps to support transportation services and supports community members who need to get to a service organization but would otherwise have limited options.

What could this look like?

If a new service is introduced, it is important that payment is integrated with existing services. Riders should be able to pay once, even if they are taking a combination of services (such as BC Transit and community shuttle).

Who could be involved?

Local community organizations who may already purchase BC Transit tickets for clients/members

Social workers

Band offices

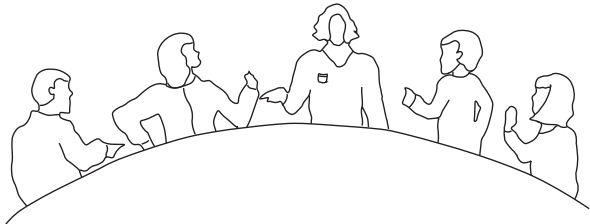
Relevant case studies (Appendix E):

- Northumberland Community Care Shuttle, ON
- Deseronto Transit, ON

Governance



1. Form a **steering committee** to provide guidance to the proposed transportation coordinator and oversee implementation and ongoing evaluation of any new service.



Why is this important?

Due to the distances between many communities in Upper Skeena, community members in more remote communities find it more difficult to access services meant for the whole area. We recommend forming a steering committee that would have representation from each community.

What could this look like?

The steering committee would be formed by representatives from each community in Upper Skeena. They would provide guidance and oversight for the transportation coordinator role as well as any new services being implemented. They would ensure that any needs from their home communities are brought forward to inform transportation.

Who could be involved?

Government and organizational/community representatives

Relevant case studies (Appendix E):

- Deseronto Transit, ON

Future Evaluation

A new transportation system should address the three challenges the community identified, shown in puzzle pieces on (page 13). The information below includes questions that the steering committee could consider when evaluating any new system.

Flexibility

- Does the service **meet community members' needs** to run errands (grocery shopping, appointments, bank)?
- Does the service align with the **activity schedules** in the communities?

Check in with....

- *Elders without a vehicle*
- *Students who stay after school for activities*

Affordability

- Do community members **feel comfortable paying** fees or fares that the service requires?
- Do low income community members know what **subsidies are available** for their transportation and how to access them?

Check in with...

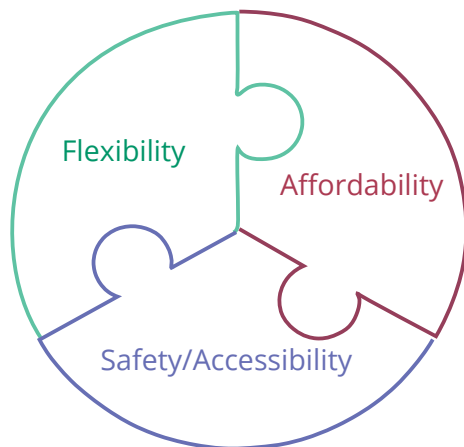
- *Elders who are on a fixed income*
- *Students*
- *Low-income parents*
- *Community members on employment insurance*

Safety/Accessibility

- Do community members **feel safe** taking the service? Are the stops well-lit, off the main road, easy to access?
- Can people with **limited mobility**, including those in wheelchairs, access the service?
- Can community members from the most remote areas access the service?

Check in with...

- *Elders*
- *Community members with limited mobility*
- *Community members from the most remote areas*



Communications

A key part of any new service is making sure all community members, from youth to Elders, have access to and can understand the information about schedules and payment that they need.

- Can community members easily find the schedule for the service in different formats (print, online, over the phone)?
- Can everyone understand all printed or online material?

Funding Opportunities

Transit services, particularly in rural and dispersed areas, often run at a deficit as rider fees are not enough to cover the high costs of operating the service. It is critical to identify sustainable, ongoing sources of funding to offset these costs. Through conversations during our visits and research about what has been done in other small and rural communities, we have identified funding opportunities that could be explored for the Upper Skeena region. A comprehensive list of potential funding opportunities can be found in **Appendix J**.

Federal-Provincial (Shared)

Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program Rural and Northern Communities

Overview:

A shared program between Canada and British Columbia that funds capital infrastructure projects, including those improving public transit in small and rural communities. Projects must include physical construction of infrastructure.

Cost-sharing covers up to:

90% of projects through municipal governments
100% for Indigenous recipients off-reserve
75% for Indigenous recipients on-reserve

Jordan's Principle Funding

Overview:

Requests can be sent by parents or guardians for specific children or community/service providers for multiple children to meet unmet needs of First Nations children. Previous funded requests have included transportation to appointments; specialized school transportation, etc.

Future potential:

Program wants to move towards an innovation fund which could be a potential funding source for addressing on-reserve/off-reserve gaps.

Provincial

Community Gaming Grants

Overview:

Funding for organizations providing services with direct benefit to community. Fundings for a community transportation strategy could potentially fit into the following streams of application: human and social services, sport, and/or public safety.

Funding:

Local organizations up to \$100,000
Regional organizations up to \$250,000

Northern Health Imagine Grants

Overview:

Funding for community-based initiatives that focus on health of communities

Funding:

Up to \$5000

Funding Opportunities

Other

Federation of Canadian Municipalities Green Municipal Fund (Non-profit organization)

Overview:

Transportation-related funding within three streams: pilot projects, capital projects, and feasibility studies. All projects must focus on minimizing greenhouse gas emissions.

Funding:

Capital projects: low interest loans up to \$5 million and grant up to 15% of this amount

Pilot projects: up to \$350,000 to 50% of costs; for feasibility studies, up to \$150,000 to 50% of costs.

New Relationship Trust (Non-profit organization)

Overview:

Direct support funding for capacity-building initiatives, governance, and economic development. Streams for both individual bands and collaborative efforts. Several Upper Skeena bands have received funding through this organization.

Funding:

A maximum of \$25,000 per project is available to individual First Nations
A maximum of \$50,000 per project is available to groups of three First Nations who are collaborating on a capacity building initiative

Value of Pilot Projects

Many of the case studies we identified (see *Appendix E* for table of shortlisted cases) began as pilot projects, accessing funding (often cost-shared) through government grants or other funding opportunities.

In order to qualify for this funding, communities often prioritized one or two demographics in greatest need of transit in that area (e.g. seniors, people with low incomes, people with disabilities and/or limited mobility).

Jurisdictional Challenges

One challenge that we heard is that funding restrictions mean some vehicles can only operate either on- or off-reserve. As a significant portion of the population of Upper Skeena live on a reserve, any new service or system needs to be accessible to people both on and off reserve. Part of this is ensuring that any funding or legislative demands on the service will not prohibit their vehicles from going on reserve.

Moving Forward

This final report concludes the third year of the partnership between UBC's School of Community and Regional Planning and the Upper Skeena Recreation Centre's Owners Partnership Committee. During our visits we have heard excitement from community members wanting a transportation system that better meets their needs. Community leaders have also expressed interest in working together with a coordinator to improve transportation and access to services for community members. The five goals related to coordination, services, scheduling, payment and governance provide guidance on a way forward so that the system addresses current challenges and adapts to meet community needs in the long term.

Once the report has been presented to community, community leaders will begin the process of implementation and will identify how to best use the seed funding they have to make the vision of a more equitable transportation system a reality.



About the Team

Our project team brings a diverse combination of past work experience, ranging from the non-profit sector to municipal, regional, and provincial governments. Team members have been involved in work related to housing, transportation, engagement, and community development, both within Canada and internationally. These experiences have contributed to a collective belief in participatory planning for equitable communities centered around local knowledge and perspectives.

At the School of Community and Regional Planning, we have worked together in a range of capacities, including during a two-week intensive field course in Barcelona, Spain. All four team members also completed a SCARP course about Indigenous community planning, and are engaged in ongoing learning about Indigenous community planning practices and the colonial implications and histories of planning.

Contact us: usrc.transportation@gmail.com



From left to right: Sarah Kristi Lone, Erin LaRocque, Annelise van der Veen, Lily Raphael

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Illustrations and images

Illustrations, maps, and photographs were created by Erin LaRocque, Sarah Kristi Lone, Lily Raphael, and Annelise van der Veen (2018-2019 SCARP Studio Team).

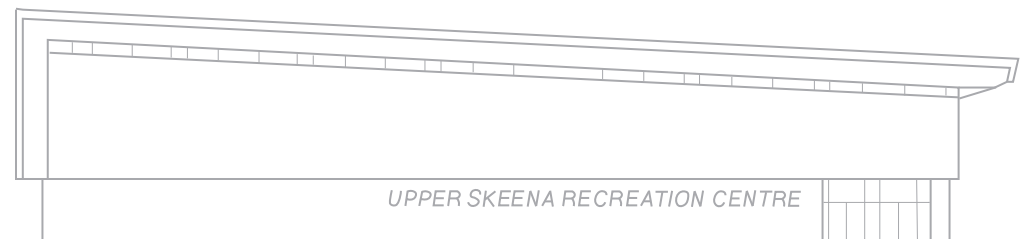


Appendices

Appendix A: Distances to the Upper Skeena Recreation Centre

Community	Distance to USRC	Driving Time Summer*	Average Walking Time
Gitanyow	71 km	50 min	12.5 h
Kitwanga	52 km	39 min	11.5 h
Gitwangak	50 km	40 min	10.5 h
Witset	39 km	30 min	2 h
Gitsegukla	31 km	24 min	6 h
Kispiox	16 km	15 min	3.25 h
South Hazelton	13 km	12 min	2.5 h
Sik-e-Dakh	11 km	10 min	2.25 h
Gitanmaax	5 km	5 min	58 min
New Hazelton	4 km	6 min	57 min
Hagwilget	3 km	3 min	37 min
Hazelton	3 km	5 min	36 min
Two Mile	2 km	4 min	26 min

*Winter driving times can be up to twice as slow



Appendix B: Summary of Project Phases

Phase 1: Scoping and background research

In Phase 1 of our project, we reviewed resources (including Comprehensive Community Plans, Community Safety Plans, and previous SCARP teams' reports) that relate to the communities in our project area, paying particular attention to comments about the transportation options in Upper Skeena. We gathered community demographic information, BC Transit schedules, fares, and policies, and conducted research on available medical shuttles and long-haul bus services. We paired this community-specific research with a review of relevant academic literature on transportation in rural communities.

Phase 2: Initial engagement on community challenges, needs and assets

In preparation for Phase 2 of the project, we created an engagement toolkit with different methods for community members to share their experiences and ideas with us. We produced an advertisement for the local newsletter to introduce ourselves and the project to the community which was published before our arrival. Additionally, we created an online survey with a brief set of questions asking about individual experiences, as well as a hard-copy engagement postcard that we distributed in community common spaces.

During our first visit to Upper Skeena, we engaged with Elders during the community lunch portion of the Gitanmaax Elders' Walking Club and with Hazelton Secondary School students during class time. We also met individually with community members who work with organizations that have significant interest in this project.

Phase 3: Development of ideas for transportation options

In Phase 3, we identified and reviewed approximately 20 case studies of transportation services in remote and rural areas across Canada. Integrating learnings from our first engagement and case study research, we developed initial ideas for transportation service options and coordination to present for feedback from community leaders and residents.

Phase 4: Engagement for community feedback and refinement of transportation options

Following the initial development of different options for the transportation strategy, in Phase 4 we developed additional engagement materials to get feedback from community members and leaders. We created a questionnaire (available in both printed and online formats) so that individuals could give their personal feedback and preferences related to the transportation services we proposed.

During our second visit to the region, we returned to the Elders' lunch in Gitanmaax to gather more input from Elders about their preferred options. Additionally, we visited the high school, where we both surveyed students in grades 10-12 and hosted a transportation system visioning activity for 18 of those students. We also met with band leaders, a community association, and individuals who work for government and community organizations.

Phase 5: Final recommendations and community engagement

In the last phase, we have been presenting our final recommendations for what the priorities and next steps should be for moving forward with the community transportation strategy. During our third and final visit to the region, we will host an open house event for the community where we will gather final input and feedback from leaders and residents.

Appendix C: Engagement Summary

Visit 1: Engagement on Challenges, Needs and Assets

Type of Engagement	Elders' Lunch	High School Session	Regional District	Rec centre Programmer	Informal Interviews	Written Feedback
Date/Location	Nov. 7, Gitanmaax Hall	Nov. 8, Hazelton Secondary School	Nov. 8	Nov. 9	Nov. 7-9	Ongoing
Number of participants	30	25	1	1	4 (Bus driver, librarians, paramedic)	11
Method	4 posters with questions Question guide for one-on-one and group discussions	Mapping where participants live Warm-up Q+A Activity with 4 rotating question posters Mapping out weekly travel Recap and ideas exploration	Semi-structured interview, with a question guide for meetings	Semi-structured interview, with a question guide for meetings	Informal interviews with questions based on context	Surveys and emails
Major Questions	<p>Poster questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do you get around the community? • What places are hard to get to? • What challenges do you face getting around? • What would make transportation better? <p>Interview questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the values of the community? • What has been your experience with transportation? 	<p>Poster questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do you get around the community? • Where do you want to go that is hard to get to? • What ideas do you have to make transportation better? • What word comes to mind when you think of public transit? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What does the RD hope to see in terms of transportation in the area? • What is the relationship between BC Transit & the Regional District? • What is your interest and ability to support the creation of a transportation strategy in Upper Skeena? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What will programming look like at the new rec centre? • Will you be coordinating with any of the school bus routes for after-school programming? • How often do programming schedules change? (E.g. seasonally, as demand changes) • Are there any plans for transportation to be coordinated to events? 	<p>Bus drivers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What kinds of transportation patterns do you notice in the region? • Do people have difficulty paying the fare? • Do many people with mobility challenges ride the bus? <p>Librarians:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are updated BC Transit schedules available at the library? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do you get around, locally and to Terrace/Smithers? • What are the challenges you face related to transportation? • How do you hear about transportation options? • What ideas do you have to make getting around easier?

Engagement Summary

Visit 1: Engagement Materials

What has been your experience with transportation in the Upper Skeena region?

WHAT?

We are interested in your experiences using public transit, ride-sharing, school buses or other means to get to work, school, doctor's appointments, shopping or social events.

WHO?

We would love to hear from everyone! We especially hope to hear from elders, youth, and others who may have greater mobility or access needs. We want to make sure your voices are represented as we think about better transportation options for the community.

WHEN?

We will be visiting the region several times between November and March. Our first visit will be **Wednesday November 7 to Friday November 9**. We would love to hear from you either in person during our visits or by email.



From left: Sarah Kristi, Annelise, Erin, Lily

ABOUT US

We are a team of four students from the School Community and Regional Planning at the University of British Columbia. We have partnered with the Owners Partnership Committee of the Upper Skeena Recreation Centre (USRC). We are working on a project to explore transportation options to the new USRC and between Upper Skeena communities.

CONTACT US

Please reach out to us if you have any questions about the project or would like to tell us about your experiences! We can be reached at usrc.transportation@gmail.com.

TRANSPORTATION WORD SEARCH

C S F M S F S
R G E U H H W
S M B D U O J
U V I T I B B
P X T C A R U
M L S L W O Q
E A N E E K S

BUS
CAR
RIDES
SHUTTLE
SKEENA
USRC



WHAT IS YOUR EXPERIENCE WITH
TRANSPORTATION IN UPPER SKEENA?

Take our survey for a chance
to win movie passes!
Go to: tinyurl.com/usrc-transportation

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Your experiences are very important in using public transit, ride-sharing, school buses or other means to get to work, school, appointments, shopping, social events and the new Recreation Centre (USRC).

The new Rec Centre will offer:

- multi-purpose gymnasium
- full-sized NHL ice rink
- walking area
- fitness centre
- climbing wall
- community room
- and much more!

HOW IS YOUR INPUT USED?

From November 2018 to April 2019 here's how we'll work with you...

1



Learn about your experiences

2



Present initial ideas for community feedback

3



Present final report with proposed improvements

Questions or comments?
usrc.transportation@gmail.com



HEART OF THE HAZELTONS
Upper Skeena Recreation Centre

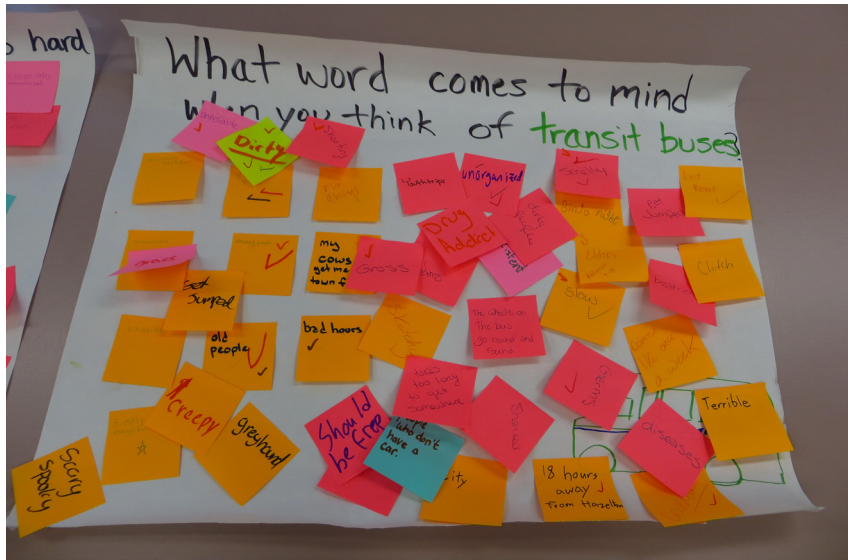
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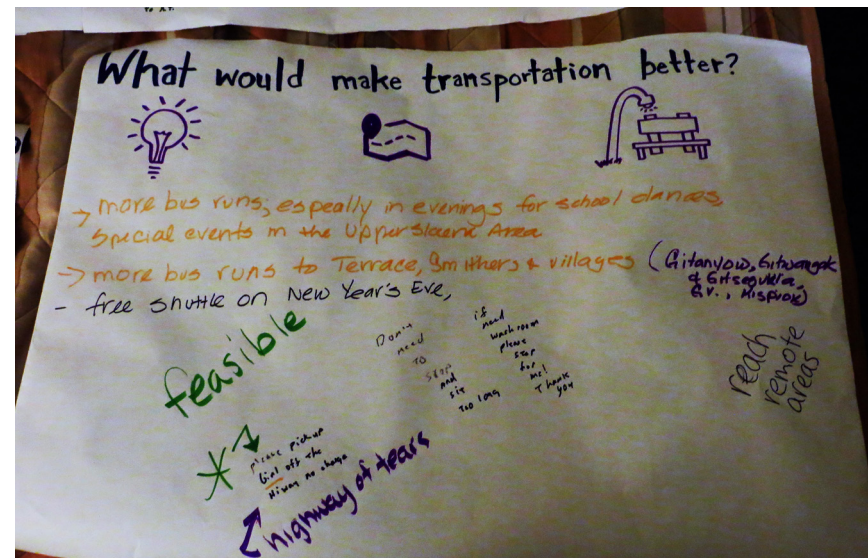
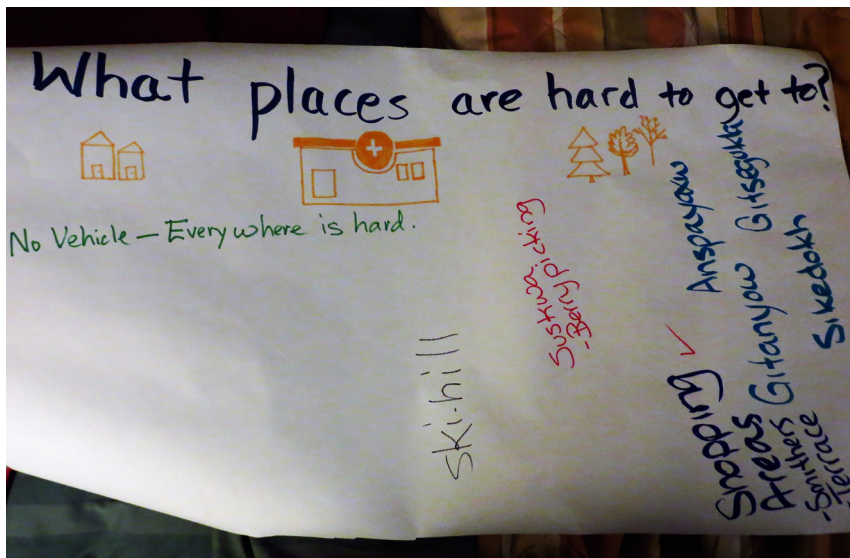
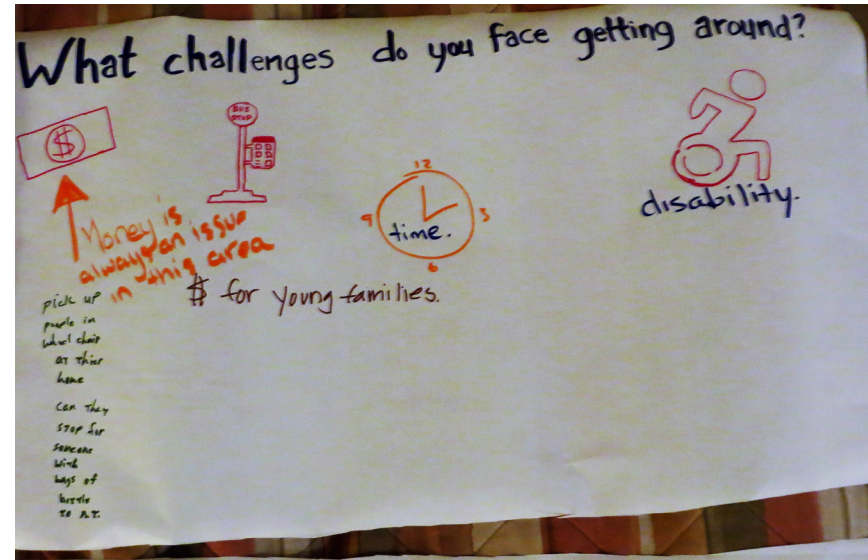
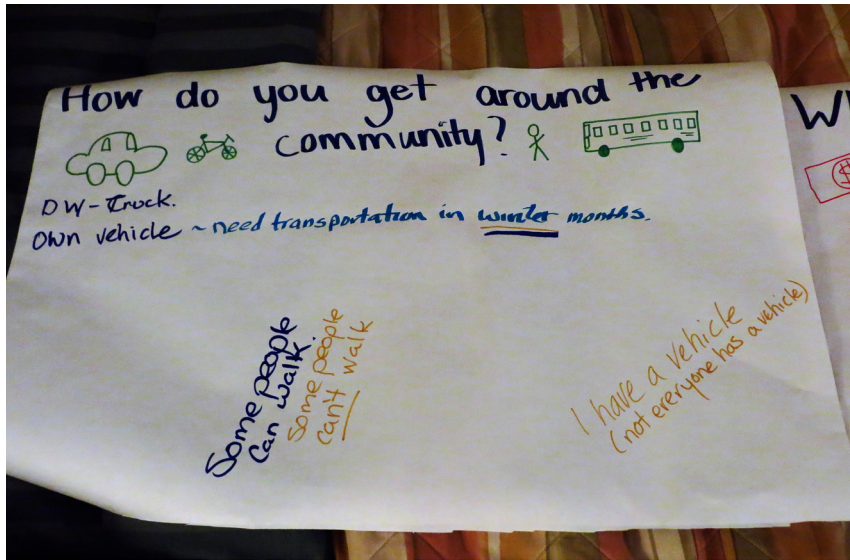
Engagement Summary

Visit 1: Photos from High School Engagement



Engagement Summary

Visit 1: Photos from Elders' Lunch



Engagement Summary

Visit 2: Engagement for Feedback on Transportation Options

Type of Engagement	Round Table	High School	Kispiox Valley Comm. Associaton	Elders' Lunch	Band Transportation Coordinators	Organizations
Date/Location	Feb. 11, Hazelton Secondary School	Feb. 12, Hazelton Secondary School	Feb. 12, Kispiox Valley Hall	Feb. 13, Gitanmaax Hall	Multiple	Multiple
Number of participants	12	115 (morning assembly) 18 (activity)	11	65	4	4
Method	Small group discussions with community leaders, teachers and coaches; completion of surveys	Assembly: presentation to grades 10-12; completion of surveys Activity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Warm up game • Split into groups to design new transportation service • Present to large group and vote on best service • Wrap up reflection 	Round table discussion with members from community association	One-on-one conversations for completion of surveys and informal interviews; Posters with questions related to the survey material for those who wanted to give feedback in an interactive way	Informal interviews with questions based on context	Informal interviews with questions based on context
Major Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Services: What do you think about the ideas presented? • Coordination: How could a service be implemented? • Resources: What would it take to make this service work? Which transportation needs should be prioritized? 	<p>Activity: Create your own service</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who would it serve primarily? • Where would this service go? • When and how often would it run? • How would people book rides or access information about the service? • What kinds of vehicles? (bus, van, car, shuttle) • What is the name of the system? • How would you promote it? • What are the services' strengths/weaknesses? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you think about the service ideas presented? • What is the likelihood that you would use this service? • What transportation challenges have you experienced or are you aware of in the region? • What should be the main priorities for a new service? • Are community members with vehicles interested in offering rides to those who do not have access to a vehicle? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Services: What do you think about the ideas presented? How would these services work for you? Which service features would you prefer? • Communication: How would you like to receive information about the service? • Payment: Which payment options would you most likely use? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What kind of transportation patterns do you see in your community? • What are the greatest priorities? • Would you be interested in being part of a partnership between bands to create a collaborative transportation program? • Services: What do you think about the ideas presented? • Coordination: How could a service be implemented? • Resources: What would it take to make this service work? 	<p>Coast Mountain School District:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there an opportunity to run one or two buses for a late after school run for students who attend after-school programs? • Are there grants or funding opportunities to support transportation? • What current initiatives exist in the region to address transportation? <p>Upper Skeena Development Centre:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the major challenges related to accessing employment? • Is there an interest in subsidizing transportation for your clients under this potential new service?

Engagement Summary

Visit 2: Engagement Materials

Upper Skeena Regional Transportation Strategy

Concepts developed by: Erin LaRocque, Sarah Kristi Lone, Lily Raphael & Annelise van der Vein
Students from UBC's School of Community and Regional Planning

Our project objective is to create a workable, creative, and community-backed transportation strategy for Upper Skeena. Our focus is on increasing access to medical care, commercial activity centres, employment, recreation and cultural events for the 13 communities in the region.

While the transportation strategy will affect all community members, we are emphasizing input from youth, elders, those with mobility challenges, and low income residents without access to a personal vehicle. During our first visit to Upper Skeena we attended the **Elder's Walking Group Lunch** and engaged with a class at the **Hazelton High School**.

Through our discussions with the community, we heard that **flexibility, affordability** and **safety and accessibility** are important concepts when considering transportation options. These three areas informed our research and the creation of the following four concepts.

We are now looking for feedback on these transportation concepts and what it would take to implement them.

In the following pages, case studies are included to give a brief overview for comparison purposes.

Flexibility

Affordability

Safety/
Accessibility

Above: Handout containing information on case studies related to the four initial transportation service ideas, prepared for Round Table and one-on-one meetings.

Right: 4-page questionnaire to understand preferences and attitudes towards initial transportation ideas, communications options, payment methods and service trade-offs.

What Should Community Transportation in Upper Skeena Look Like?

About yourself

Home Community: _____

Age group:

<input type="checkbox"/> 12 and under	<input type="checkbox"/> 13 - 19	<input type="checkbox"/> 20 - 34
<input type="checkbox"/> 35 - 49	<input type="checkbox"/> 50 - 64	<input type="checkbox"/> 65 - 74
<input type="checkbox"/> 75 and higher		

Communication

Choose your **top 2** ways you like to receive information or book rides

Phone Text Online Printed

What would you prefer? | Pick the option that is most important to you

<input type="checkbox"/> Trips 2 times a month to further destinations (Terrace or Smithers)	OR	<input type="checkbox"/> Services 2 times a week within the region (between Gitanyow, Kispiox, Witset)
<input type="checkbox"/> Serve fewer people with service exactly when they need it	OR	<input type="checkbox"/> Serve more people at specific times based on community events/activities schedule
<input type="checkbox"/> Door-to-door service, with longer route times while the vehicle picks up other passengers	OR	<input type="checkbox"/> Walkable meeting spots for the bus **anyone with mobility issues would always get door-to-door services
<input type="checkbox"/> Better access to regularly scheduled activities (e.g. sessions at the rec centre)	OR	<input type="checkbox"/> Better access to special community events (e.g. feasts, harvests, sports tournaments)

Services

Choose which **2** options you think best meet community needs

On-Demand
Vehicles would pick people up on an as-needed basis. You would need to book a ride. This service could be door-to-door or from pick-up points you could walk to.

Activity-Based
A vehicle would bring community members to and from special events (e.g. community feasts, sports tournaments) and/or regular, recurring activities (e.g. weekly walking group, monthly shopping trips).

Evening Service
An extra school bus or shuttle would run from Hazelton Secondary School & the new rec centre to all communities on weekday evenings. It would only run in one direction (to bring people home).

Connector Shuttle
A shuttle would connect Gitanyow, Kispiox & Glen Vowell to BC Transit routes on Highway 16. Another option could add a route between the Hazeltons (South Hazelton, New Town, Old Town, Gitanmaax, Hagwilget, Two Mile).

Payment

Which payment options would you most likely use?

Pay per ride Pay for a specific number of rides in advance Pay for monthly pass Trade services or items for a ride

Please include any additional comments, feedback, or questions below.

Thank you!

Engagement Summary

Visit 2: Hazelton Secondary School Engagement Activity

In February, a group of students in grades 10, 11, and 12 at Hazelton Secondary School participated in a workshop activity. The eighteen participants signed up for the session during morning assembly, where they had received information about the project generally and had completed the survey (*Appendix F*). During the workshop session, students formed groups and presented their ideal transportation strategy.

First, students designed a transportation system, considering the following questions:

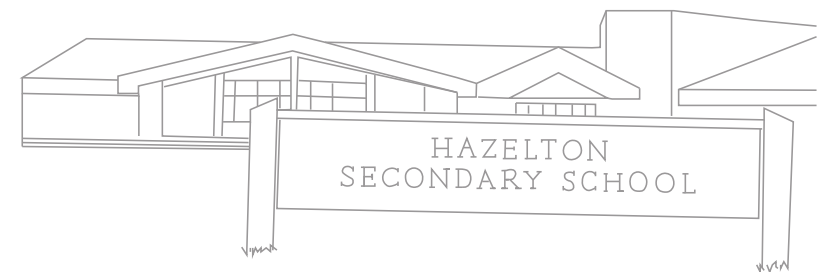
- Who would it serve primarily?
- Where would this service go?
- When and how often would it run?
- What kind of service would it be?
- How would people book rides or access information about the service?
- What kinds of vehicles? (bus, van, car, shuttle)
- What is the name of the system?
- How would you promote it?
- What are your service's strengths?
- What are its weaknesses?

They worked within the following parameters:

- Thinking creatively while being realistic.
- Developing a service for the geographic region of Upper Skeena, between Smithers and Terrace.
- Creating a service in which all vehicles are at least half-full when they run, so they can't run continuously if there is not enough demand.

They then presented their work to their peers, highlighting the most important aspects of their system.

At the end of the pitches, each participant voted for the top two services they wanted to see implemented (they were not allowed to vote for their own).



Engagement Summary

Visit 2: Themes from High School Presentations

Below are some of the themes that were reflected in the student pitches. Themes in green appeared in at least one of the two system ideas that received the most support from the students.

Names/slogans:

- Fast & Furious
- Northwest Bustice League
 - * Serving Bustice to the People in Need
 - * Serving Bustice since 2019
- Buddy Bus
- Skeena Skidaddle Skidoodle Buses
- First Nations Transportation

Values:

- Love for everyone
- Lots of hearts

Who they serve:

- Anyone and everyone
- Serves general public
- The working class + whoever will pay

Type of service:

- Shuttle bus
- Public bus
- Runs on request and on schedule
- They don't book their rides, they just show up

Local routes:

- Local communities 3x/day in a loop
- Kispiox, Smithers, Gitanyow. 3 buses, one for each route
- Buses 4x - Goes to all the far out towns, and in between the closer towns

Further distances:

- Goes to Terrace and Smithers 2x/week
- Interest in weekend visits to Terrace (drop off Friday night, come back Sunday morning)
- 2x/week Gitanyow to Smithers and Terrace

Activity-based:

- Activities after school & weekends
- Regularly scheduled activities

Schedule:

- Runs mornings at 8 and 9 and evenings 7 pm
- Monday through Thursday 7 am to 8 pm & Friday to Sunday 7 am to 11 pm
- 9:30 - 6:45 pm bus schedule
- 8 am - early in the morning until late at night (10 pm)

Type of vehicles:

- Car, bus, 14 seater vans, shuttle

Communications & payment

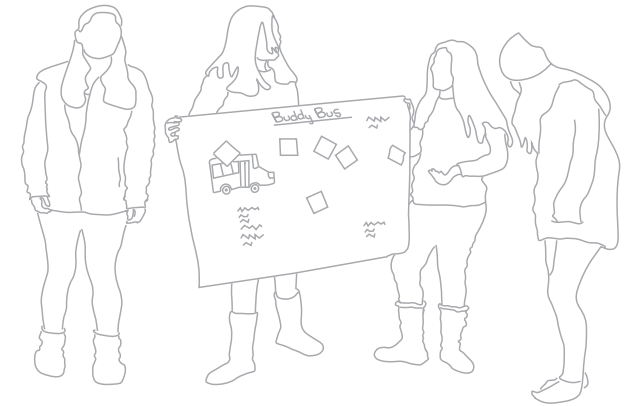
- Text or phone a number for immediate transit - pay more for instant ride
- Tickets with a certain amount of rides
- \$2/each ticket, 25 pack
- Booking online at northwestbusticel.ca or phone at 250-bus-tice
- Pay per ride, monthly, whatever works
- \$10 connector schedule

Promotions

- Word of mouth
- Facebook
- Posters
- Online/phone/handouts
- Billboards, internet, printed paper

Other features

- Covered bus shelters
- Meeting spots

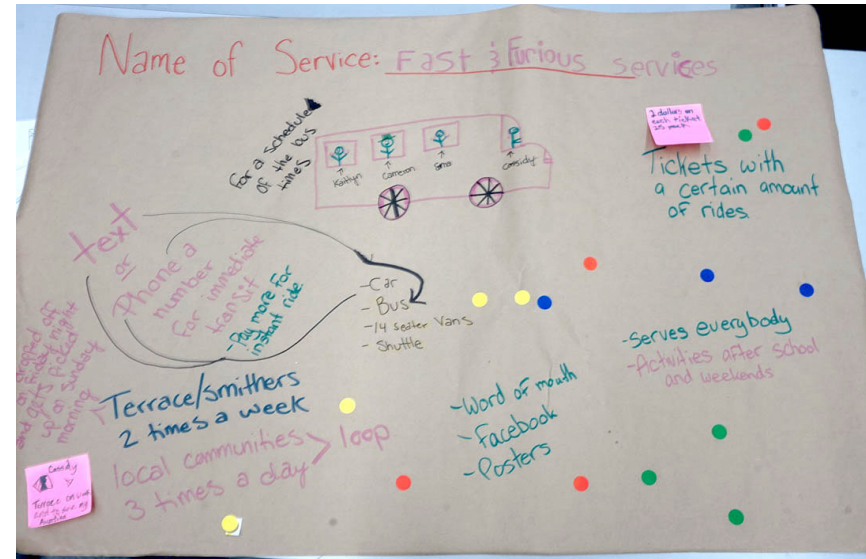
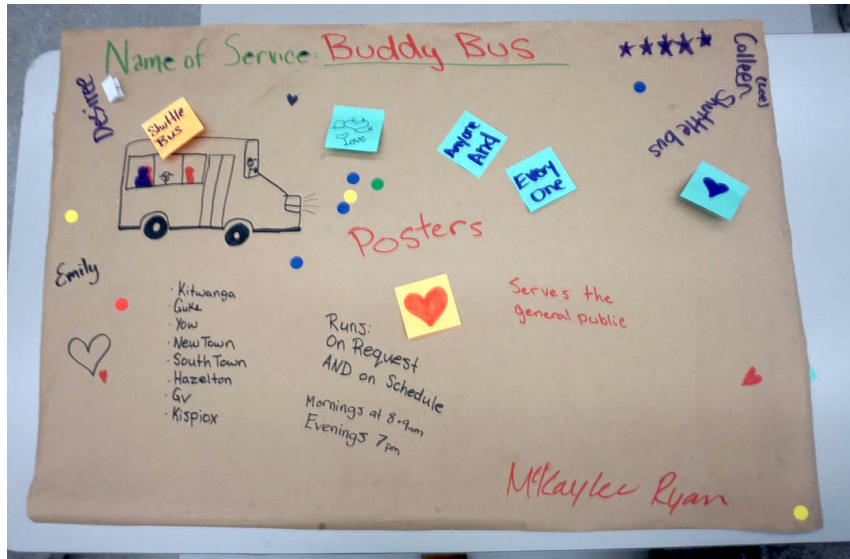


At the end of the session, students reflected on what they would keep in mind when designing a transportation system, based on their experience in the workshop. These are their words:



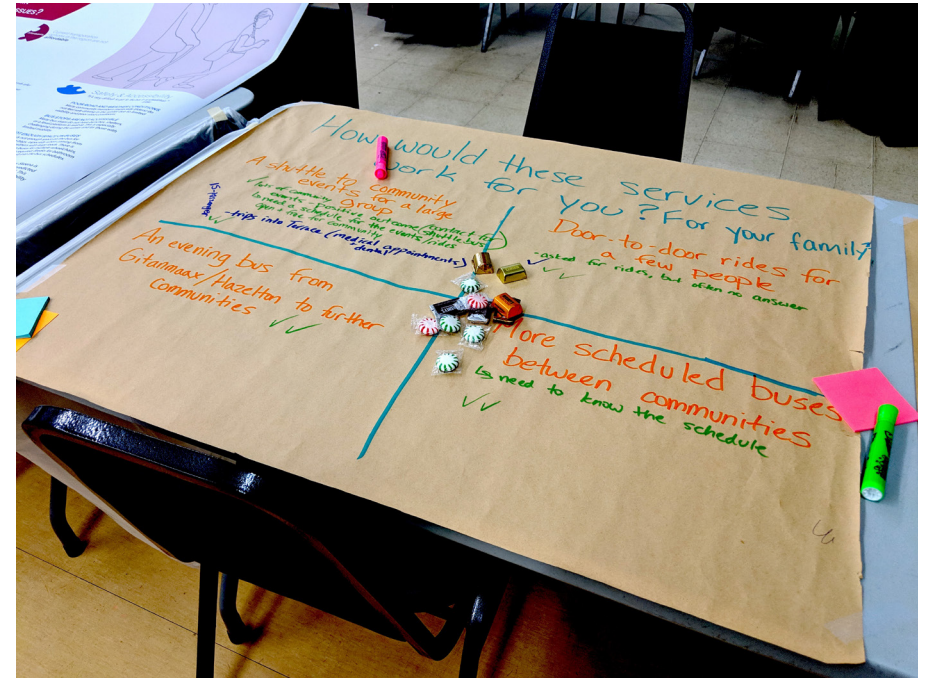
Engagement Summary

Visit 2: Photos from High School Engagement



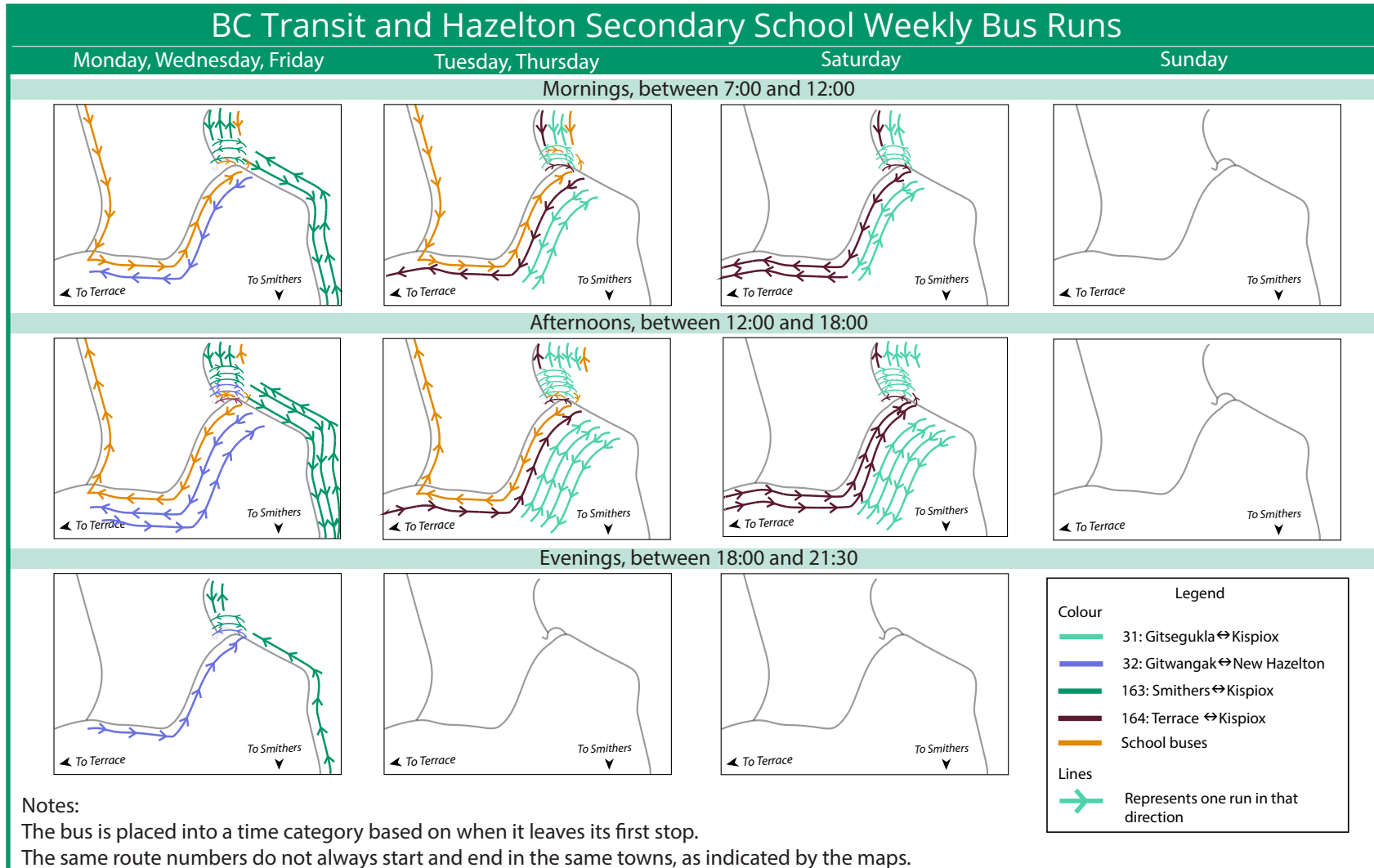
Engagement Summary

Visit 2: Photos from Elders' Lunch



Appendix D: Mapped Schedules

From conversations with community members and background research, we learned that most community events occur during the evenings or on weekends. Mapping out both BC Transit and Hazelton Secondary School current bus schedules reveals that there are very few options during these travel times. Below, every BC Transit and high school bus run has been mapped. There are a total of **68 BC Transit bus runs (one-way) per week**, which is less than 5 round trips a day on average. There are 10 school bus runs to the secondary school (one-way) per week.



Appendix E: Case Studies

Case Study	Hinton (AB)	Deseronto (ON)	Northumberland Community Care Shuttle (ON)	Salaberry-de-Valleyfield Taxibus (QC)	Grey-Bruce Counties (ON)	Moving GB Pilot Innisfil (ON) - Feasibility study
Type of Service	Fixed Route/Events-Based	Fixed Route Regional (some flexibility)	Demand Responsive (pre-booked)	Blended (Demand Responsive/Semi-Fixed)	Blended (Demand Responsive/Events-Based)	Fixed Route
Overview	The Town of Hinton runs two services: 1) a fixed-route service that runs Mon-Sat once an hour; and 2) a door-to-door on-demand/event-based service (Freedom Express). This service is for seniors, persons with special needs of all ages, and residents with mobility limitations and operates 35 hr/week, 7 days/wk on-request.	Deseronto Transit is a fixed-route intercity service running Mon-Fri, with selected additional stops and pick-up times available by-request. The service is owned by the Town of Deseronto and guided by a steering committee of government and community representatives.	Community Care Northumberland offers two groups of transportation services: 1) door-to-door volunteer driving for seniors & persons with disabilities and 2) demand- responsive specialized services (accessible service & rural service). The rural service is most applicable to Upper Skeena, offering pre-booked services to residents in vehicles owned by the agency.	The Salaberry-de-Valleyfield Taxibus is a door-to-door shared taxi service run by the regional government. This service runs 7 days a week and requires an initial sign-up to access rides.	Home and Community Support Services (HCSS) operates 1) a transportation service for seniors and people with disabilities for non-medical emergencies and basic errands, available Mon-Fri on a first-come, first-serve basis. Riders must reserve 2 days in advance. In 2016, HCSS and Grey County partnered to pilot 2) a fixed-route van service operating twice a day 2 days/week for public riders.	The Town of Innisfil completed a feasibility study as part of their Transportation Master Plan to see what the options for fixed-transit routes in the town were. This study includes financial assessments of transit options and compares methods of implementation. Note: As this system was not implemented, information is provided for comparison purposes only.
Population & Ridership	Population (Town): 10,000 Ridership: 20,872 (Fixed-route, 2017) 2,959 (Freedom Express, 2017)	Population (Town): 1,835 (note: this is a regional service so travels between municipalities) Ridership: 3,157 (2007) 15,288 (2013)	Population (County): 85,000	Population: 40,000 Ridership: 24,749 (2003)	Population (total area): 93,000	Population (Town): 36,500
Geographic Area	34 km ² Route of fixed-service is 26km in length and takes one hour for a round trip	1000 km ² Serves Deseronto, Napanee, Belleville & Prince Edward County	1,905 km ² Vans travel an estimated 90,000km/route/year (each van budgeted to last 5 years)	100 km ² Approximately 173,000km traveled in 2011	6,447 km ²	262.7km ²
Staffing Requirements	1 P/T municipal employee driver 4 casual employees (drivers for either system average \$26.92/hr)	1 F/T administrator to oversee operations (employed by town) 1 P/T admin assistant 5 P/T drivers	1 F/T scheduler, 1 P/T scheduler 2 F/T coordinators 1 F/T lead driver 7 P/T/casual drivers	Unknown (following up with transit administrator for more info)	Unknown	Not implemented

Case Studies

Case Study	Hinton (AB)	Deseronto (ON)	Northumberland Community Care Shuttle (ON)	Salaberry-de Valleyfield Taxibus (QC)	Grey-Bruce Counties (ON)	Moving GB Pilot Innisfil (ON) - Feasibility study
Start-up Budget & Funding	Pilot service in 2007 (no other details)	\$225,000 for pilot through one-time grant from Government of Ontario	Initial pilot (2008) used a van from another organization. In 2010, received \$105,000 in grants to continue services, incl. \$80,000 grant from Government of Ontario (\$20K for van & \$60K for operations)	Unknown	\$100,000 in funding for the Highway 10 fixed route van service pilot from the Government of Ontario, Ministry of Transportation (2016)	Estimated \$231,000 (for one bus)
Annual Operating Costs	\$293,000 (2014) Revenue from passengers: \$59,000; from advertising: \$3,000 In 2014, Town paid company First Canada \$112,100: Capital cost recovery (\$22,300); Fuel (\$29,300); Repairs (\$19,500); Insurance (\$3,700); Wages, Benefits, taxes (\$13,000); Other (\$24,300).	\$330,000 (2013)	Unknown	\$400,440 (2011)	Unknown	1 Bus: Costed at between \$330,000 and \$410,000 a year for the first five years (increases each year) 2 Buses: between \$541,000 and \$708,000 a year for the first five years (increases each year)
User Fees	\$3/ride, \$30/12 ride punch, \$70/30 ride pass; quarterly seniors pass: \$50; legally blind passengers: free	\$3.50/ride (within city) to \$13.50/ride, depending on distance. A local social service agency purchases a number of tickets annually to provide to clients.	\$5/ride. Tickets on this service are also valid on regional fixed route service. Some local service agencies buy blocks of passes to give out to clients.	For Residents: \$4.50- 7.25/ride, depending on distance \$110/month pass Free under 12 (accompanied by an adult) Non-residents: \$170/month \$8.25/ride Average cost of \$8.06 per passenger in 2003	Seniors' service: nominal fee, by distance and client's ability to pay. Highway 10 fixed-route pilot: \$10 for round trips under 20 km; flat rate of \$0.45/km applies for over 20km Ontario Works and Ontario Disability Support Program provide subsidies for certain services	\$3 fare recommended; 20% discount for senior/student ride cards; 40% discount for children; approx. 30% discount for monthly ride cards (based on calculation of 35 rides/month)

Case Studies

Case Study	Hinton (AB)	Deseronto (ON)	Northumberland Community Care Shuttle (ON)	Salaberry-de Valleyfield Taxibus (QC)	Grey-Bruce Counties (ON)	Moving GB Pilot Innisfil (ON) - Feasibility study
Capital Equipment (number and type of vehicles)	Fixed-route: 2 used cutaway-style buses (formerly school buses - poorly suited for public transit because high floor is difficult to access for those with mobility challenges) Freedom Express: wheelchair lift-equipped cutaway bus. Cost to Town under past provincial formula: \$90,000 per small, heavy-duty transit bus.	2 small buses (one 11-passenger and 1 wheelchair; one 16 passenger and 2 wheelchairs); 2 minivans	Specialized Transportation System (includes accessible & rural services): 6 vans, 4 of which are wheelchair-accessible. Volunteer driving service: Drivers' personal vehicles	35 total vehicles, with a combination of cars and vans (not all running at the same time)	Seniors' service: 5 wheelchair accessible vans (sub-contracted vehicles from transportation company); 50 personal vehicles (volunteers) Highway 10 pilot: wheelchair-accessible van	Year one - \$231,000 for 1 bus, \$439,000 for 2 buses, for each, \$10,000 a year from then-on.
Grant and Funding Opportunities	Government of Alberta historically paid 80%+ for cost of new accessible buses. Fed government allocated \$241,000 capital funding for transit projects for Hinton.	Funding through Homeless Partnering Initiative; Provincial Gas Tax Fund; Child Benefit Reinvestment Fund (some of these ON-specific).	Funding through the Provincial Gas Tax Fund; United Way; local service agencies; three municipalities within the County.	Provincial and federal funding (Transports Quebec; Société d'aide de développement collectif (SADC)); Desjardins; regional government.	Funding through Government of Ontario Community Transportation Fund - Municipal Stream.	Ontario Gas Tax Funding (approx. \$240,000); County funding; Cost-sharing system with City of Barrie; development charges and advertising.
Coordination & Roles	Mixed-model: Fixed-route transit bus, spare bus, and maintenance provided by First Canada. Drivers are Town of Hinton employees. Management by Town's Family and Community Support Services - no dedicated management or support staff.	System is owned/operated by Town, but guided by Transit Management Committee of about 9 people, including organizational and government representatives.	Community Care Northumberland organization operates and coordinates the service and hires employees. One centralized booking line is used for all services.	Run by regional government.	For seniors' service: Home and Community Support Services of Grey-Bruce (HCSS) coordinates services for their clients. For pilot: Grey County facilitates access to government funding.	Would be run by the Town of Innisfil but operations would be contracted out through an RFP (suggest a joint transit management committee to address operational and contractual issues).

Appendix F: Survey Data

Methodology

Community members completed the questionnaire on service preferences at a number of in-person engagement events during the second community visit (February 11-16, 2019). The events included a high school engagement, conversations at the Gitanmaax Elders' lunch, a board meeting of the Kispiox Valley Association, a round table discussion with coaches and community leaders, and informal conversations with community members.

Additional questionnaires were left at public locations throughout the visit and with community members and organizational representatives. The questions were also formatted into an online survey that was distributed to community partners and other contacts via email. The survey was closed on March 14, approximately a month after the visit. A total of 132 surveys were completed and analyzed. All survey questions were optional, so all surveys with at least one response were included in the totals.

Survey Questions and Responses

Q1. What community do you live in?

Community	Number of respondents
Gitanmaax	24
New Hazelton	16
Hazelton	12
Gitsegukla	11
Kitwanga	11
Gitanyow	10
South Hazelton	9
Gitwangak	8
Glen Vowell/ Sik-e-dakh	8
Kispiox	4
Two Mile	4
Kispiox Valley	3
Hagwilget	2
Suskwa	1
Unspecified	9
Total	132

Q2. How old are you?

Age	Number of respondents
13 - 19	91
20 - 34	2
35 - 49	8
50 - 64	13
65 - 74	9
75 or Higher	4
Unspecified	5
Total	132

Q3. Choose the two services that you think best meet community needs
(multiple responses allowed)

Preferred Service	Number of responses
Connector Shuttle	45
Event-based shuttles	57
On-Demand	60
Additional evening bus	80
Total respondents	126
Total responses	242

Q3b. If you could combine any of the above options, what would you combine? Do you have any other ideas?

Q4. Choose the top 2 ways you like to receive information or book rides
(multiple responses allowed)

Preferred Communication	Number of responses
Printed	38
Online	59
Phone	64
Text	64
Total respondents	129
Total responses	225

Survey Data

Q5-8. What would you prefer? For each option, pick the option that is most important to you.

Preference	Number of responses
Trips 2 times a month to further locations	48
Service 2 times a week within the region	71
Total respondents	119

Preference	Number of responses
Serve fewer people exactly when they need it	30
Serve more people at specific times	77
Total respondents	107

Preference	Number of responses
Door-to-door service with longer wait times	21
Walkable meeting spots	90
Total respondents	111

Preference	Number of responses
Better access to special community events	55
Better access to regularly scheduled activities	60
Total respondents	115

Q9. Which payment options would you most likely use? (multiple responses allowed)

Preferred payment option	Number of responses
Trade services or items for a ride	6
Pay for a specific number of rides in advance	21
Pay per ride	58
Pay for a monthly pass	64
Total respondents	129
Total responses	225

Q10. Do you have any additional feedback, comments, or questions?

Comments from this question have been organized thematically. Some comments have been edited or omitted to reduce duplication and protect anonymity.

Payment & Affordability

- I can see having the ability for those more fortunate to donate rides or funds for rides within the community
- Can you trade fried bread for a ride?
- Free rides for people who can't afford too much.
- Pay per ride should be available, especially for single events. But the ability to pay for specific number of rides for an activity schedule would be more useful for Bands.
- Need a monthly pass!

Survey Data

Options for Seniors and Persons with limited mobility

- Would be nice to see bus route or stops to senior complexes with regular runs for seniors to hospital
- Hard to book health shuttle from band office unless very sick or very unable to walk.
- We really need a handy dart type service (x2)
- Takes scooter on bus; needs ramp + open space for it; has tripped on road--doesn't want to take any chances

Options for students:

- Finally something for the students!
- We have so many youth who cannot participate in activities due to no transportation after school; usually the bands arrange something for special events. I am looking forward to improved transportation.

Service preferences/Reactions to concepts:

- Activity Based - This happens already; Connector Shuttle - not feasible for young kids
- Especially appreciate the evening service from the High School to Gitanyow etc, since we have so many bus students who cannot do after school sports, music or other extra-curricular activities.
- More rides in evening and to Rupert and Prince George
- Need way to pick kids at elementary school to bring to hockey practice, then home at decent hour. Secondary kids just need the ride home (from arena).
- Need a hybrid/combination of a system that meets needs for specific events and day to day activity like medical appointments and shopping.
- We really need a bus tour van to take students home from after-school activities
- Hope that it is regularly scheduled and consistent and later in the evening as we regularly have our rehearsals later in the evening after sports at our school to accommodate those who want to do both.
- Evening Service and Activity Based. Would like to see a transit type system setup where patrons can purchase one pass that is good for travel throughout the Hazeltons. Using one pass for example can get you from Gitanyow - Kispiox and anywhere in between without the need to pay multiple times
- An option is needed for members that miss the last bus in Smithers, as we have had members stranded, in the freezing temperatures, there should be a number at the bus stops for an emergency situation so no one is left behind.

Engagement Feedback

- *Question about why engagement events were not held at specific locations, especially in New Hazelton*
- A lot of people still do not have access to internet, so what are other ways you are permitting to have their input, some do not have access to the English language, so do you have an interpreter for those people.
- *Comment about where we chose to hold engagements and emphasis on the importance of hearing from low-income families and seniors. Questions about where funding for a new strategy will realistically come from.*

General comments:

- This would be good for many people in the community.

Appendix G: Tips for Coordinator

The role of the coordinator

The transportation coordinator would be the main contact for organizations trying to organize transportation to events and activities and would act as a dispatch for organizations and community members as needed. When receiving a request for transportation, the coordinator would first offer information on any existing/fixed routes that run in the area, followed by the opportunity to book a ride in an on-demand basis or get a lift from a volunteer. The coordinator would work with activity programmers from the high school and recreation centre to ensure the transportation options align with activities and events. The steering committee would oversee the coordinator role and provide advice and feedback on how the services work for their home communities to ensure the service meets the needs of all communities.

The coordinator could be responsible for the following tasks:

- Operating phone line for transportation schedule information;
- Dispatching services and rides as needed through phone, email, text;
- Maintaining an email, printed materials (posters, billboards, handouts) and social media (facebook);
- Promoting community transportation services to encourage ridership in the region;
- Collaborating with community organizations; Coordinating a common payment method for different service offerings;
- Connecting with BC Transit and bringing forward community concerns regarding service (as detailed in Appendix I);
- Creating a map with examples of safe stop areas;
- Ensuring schedules and route map information is developed in a way that includes all services in an easy-to-read manner;
- Ensuring compliance with transportation regulations.

Details on select job components

Addressing communication challenges for passengers

With the Steering Committee, the coordinator should continue to investigate how to communicate with passengers who have or would like to book a service. There is not good cell phone coverage in the area, and areas without cell phone connection also lack pay phones. Some use radio transmitters to communicate. The coordinator should consider ways of connecting with those who do not have good phone service and may have missed a bus.

Developing a ride sign-up system

Consider having a sign-up for people in need of rides to areas as well as those offering rides. Look into volunteer screening system to ensure drivers and passengers can feel safe. A ride sign-up system could either take the form of a coordinator or volunteer matching drivers with passengers, or there could be a way for drivers or riders to view each others' information and make the connections themselves.

Investigating opportunities to reduce siloed transportation offerings

One of the challenges in Upper Skeena is that some transportation services are only offered to select groups. For instance, school buses are not currently permitted to take non-student passengers due to liability concerns. The coordinator could look into paying for BC Transit to run additional services, using the money that would typically be spent by Coast Mountain School Board on school buses. This "school special" model has been used by the district in Terrace and will also be unrolled in Kitimat. This increases demand for public transportation and keeps it in the community while still ensuring rides for students to school. To date, this model has served those in more densely populated areas, while school buses continue to run in the less populated areas.

Tips for Coordinator

Promoting services

Promote the services to encourage ridership in the region, using a range of media including online (especially facebook), phone, community meetings, and printed materials such as posters, billboards, and handouts. Each of these media help to capture feedback from different types of people. Work with local community workers, school staff, and coaches to spread the word about transportation resources and ensure familiarity with the compiled schedules.

Additional staffing considerations

Contractor and coordination assistance

Consider hiring an additional contractor to assist the coordinator at the beginning of the project. This contractor could help with developing schedules, mapping, and promoting services. More staffing might be useful later on as well, if the new transportation strategy is successful and requires more coordination. Some communities use two part-time staff people to create complementary schedules and ensure there are back-up staff for vacation coverage or in case of emergencies.

Regular drivers

We heard from several communities that it was hard to find Class 4 drivers because it was expensive to maintain Class 4 licensing, which involves paying for medical tests. Some Class 4 drivers left jobs in local communities because work was too sporadic. Ensure steady employment for Class 4 drivers and maintain a list of those with Class 4 licences all communities. Use central funding to pay for medical tests required.

Vehicle maintenance

Consider the need for vehicle maintenance and whether there should be contractors, a staff person to serve all communities, or if these issues will be dealt with on an as-needed basis.

Technical information to consider

The coordinator will likely be expected to identify capital needs. Here are some considerations when selecting new equipment.

Vehicle type

It is important to use the appropriate sized vehicle for transportation services so that they are cost effective. Some municipalities have found that it was more cost effective to purchase new smaller vans rather than run services in existing large buses which would cost more to operate and maintain. There are several bus cost calculators available online. Here is one: <http://www.freightmetrics.com.au/Calculators%7CRoad/BusOperatingCost/tabid/671/Default.aspx>.

Bus sizes

Consider a small, heavy duty transit bus for the event or connector shuttle options. This would be cheaper than maintaining a larger sized vehicle such as a school bus.

Wheelchair access

To make it easier for passengers with wheelchairs to use public transportation, choose buses that have ground-level access, as opposed to retrofitting school buses that are high-floor.

Tips for Coordinator

Car seats

To ensure families have safe access to transportation, car seats for small children should be made available through new transportation service. When making a booking, the coordinator could ask if passengers need a car seat for their trip, similar to how individuals are asked if they need wheelchair accessibility.

Bus racks

Community members have identified that BC Transit currently only has room for two grocery bags per person, but passengers often need more space. Any new vehicles should include space for additional groceries or bulkier items. There are several options for bus storage:

- Many transit operators with services to train stations or airports have installed luggage racks on those routes. The ones used by the Toronto Transit Corporation cost \$2000/bus in 2013 and required removing 4 seats on the bus.
- Long-haul buses often have overhead luggage racks or compartments, although they require lots of headroom and should be able to secure items so that they do not fall down while driving along the winding highway.
- Some shuttle buses affix a large storage unit on the outside of the bus at the back. For instance, this is used by the Hudson Bay Mountain shuttle in Smithers for ski storage. If shelving was added to these boxes, they could be a solution for increasing storage without reducing seats.

Key organizations to connect with for more information

Witset Band Administration

- Is involved in the Transit Committee in Smithers, a group that is developing a central pamphlet for all schedules of BC Transit, BC Bus North, and Northern Health, from Prince George to Terrace.
- Is connected to one of their members who trains Class 4 drivers in Witset.

Gitanmaax Health Shuttle

- Has experience with dispatch, scheduling, and funding community shuttles.

Coast Mountain School Board

- Has data related to safe stopping areas
- Is seeking funding for evening bus service for students of Hazelton Secondary School
- Has a background in creating school specials - partnerships with BC Transit

Appendix H: Recommendations for Rec Centre

Recommendation	Why is this important?	What could this look like?
<p>Make sure transportation schedules and service information are easy to find in the rec centre.</p>	<p>Many community members expressed an interest in taking transit or getting a ride to the new rec centre when it opens. However, many are unsure about what options are available to get them to and from the centre.</p>	<p>Provide a space, such as a bulletin board or a courtesy phone, where transportation information, options, and schedules can easily be accessed by anyone visiting the rec centre.</p> <p>There was also an interest in having a space where community members could self-organize carpooling at the rec centre, such as log book or sign-up sheet with basic information (contact information as well as when the driver would depart, where the car was heading, how many seats were available, and if any gas money or service trades were requested).</p>
<p>Work with transportation providers to align program and transportation schedules.</p>	<p>Some community members interested in using the rec centre indicated that they would need community transportation to and from events. Coaches also expressed an interest in sports and other activities being scheduled in conjunction with transportation schedules to ensure students have a ride home.</p>	<p>Ongoing communication between program schedulers and transportation strategy operator(s) would help facilitate safe access to events and regular programming. Activities should be scheduled close together, with youth events capping at 7 pm so they can get a bus or ride without getting home too late.</p>
<p>Have storage amenities for the community at the rec centre.</p>	<p>Community members try to reduce the amount of travel within the region by combining errands with social visits. Elders and other community members who ride the bus mentioned that when they run errands in town, there is a lack of space to put their belongings, in particular, their shopping bags. They identified a clear need for a safe place to store bags and purchases in town.</p>	<p>If there is capacity, we suggest that the rec centre would be a good location for this service so that those going to attend community events or watch grandkids play sports have a safe place to store their belongings.</p> <p>Since lockers are common at recreation centres, this could be one option.</p>
<p>Ensure that transportation to and from the rec centre is safe and accessible.</p>	<p>Several community members were concerned about the safety of bus stops and requested that more bus stops should be located off of the main roads.</p> <p>Students often walk between activities and concerns were expressed about their safety walking on the road between the high school and the rec centre.</p>	<p>The bus stop at the rec centre should be located off of the main road (i.e. in the parking lot or right by the entrance).</p> <p>There should be a safe path between the rec centre and the high school for students to easily move between the two buildings.</p>

Appendix I: Recommendations for BC Transit

The following recommendations came from meetings with community members and local organizations. We suggest that the future coordinator brings forward these concerns and recommendations to BC Transit.

Recommendation	Why is this important?	What could this look like?
Improve/alter bus route maps and schedule.	Community members suggested that the schedule and map for the bus were difficult to read and understand. Students and other community members mentioned that they had tried to flag down buses in the past but that the buses did not always stop for them. On our visits we noticed some bus stops are incorrectly labelled on the map or are missing.	<p>BC Transit could work with community members to ensure that the schedule and maps are readable for the community. It would be useful for community members if a map of the bus stops include all stops correctly and clearly labelled.</p> <p>Since BC Transit suggests that drivers will stop for community members who flag down the bus in safe areas, a map with a few examples of safe stop areas would be helpful for people trying to flag down the bus.</p>
Ensure that bus schedules are easy to access.	Multiple organizations and community members told us they have asked BC Transit for schedules in the past but don't always receive them. They run out of schedules quickly as community members pick them up from these organizations regularly. Elders especially like to have a printed schedule to know when the bus runs.	BC Transit could ensure one staff person is regularly available to print and mail out schedules to community organizations. There could be a list of organizations that carry the printed schedules that could be auto-mailed a few times a year, including when schedule updates occur.
Provide longer stopover times at certain stops for passengers to run a quick errand or use the bathroom.	Elders in the community take the bus but often need just 5-10 minutes at a stop, such as the bank, to go in and deposit something or to use the bathroom.	<p>BC Transit drivers could be asked to stop and wait in specifically designated places for 5-10 minutes.</p> <p>For instance, New Hazelton was identified as a place where people made quick stops at the bank or post office, and Gitsegukla and Kitwanga were identified as good places for a bathroom break on longer routes.</p>
Add storage racks on buses.	Many community members who go shopping in Gitanmaax, Smithers, and Terrace, especially Elders or people with mobility challenges, expressed a need for more space for their bags.	<p>It would be helpful for many community members who travel into Smithers and Terrace to have storage options on the BC Transit buses.</p> <p>Luggage racks could be added inside the buses for people to put their bags on and to make sure bags don't take up extra seating.</p>
Improve bus fare options for low income residents.	A bus driver said that she sees an increase in ridership at the end of the month after social assistance cheques are received. Elders also mentioned that the fare can be too expensive for people on a fixed income, and that it is difficult to get bus passes. Currently, passes can only be purchased in Terrace and Smithers.	<p>The Regional District of Kitimat-Stikine, the Gitksan Government Commission, local Bands, and municipalities could work with BC Transit to subsidize annual passes and make sure residents can buy them in at band and municipal offices.</p> <p>BC Transit could provide clarity on the policy that community members are not turned away for a lack of funds. Drivers could be told not to ask riders for funds when they board, and to have the policy about not turning passengers away printed below the fare prices.</p>
Support the development of mobile apps by making bus data accessible.	Currently Hazelton, Terrace, and Smithers routes are excluded from the list of open data of bus routes, which means Google Maps and various transit apps are not able to access information. Since the pamphlets can be hard to read, community members have requested access to schedules in an easier-to-read way.	BC Transit could ensure that bus data for the Hazelton Region was put in Application Programming Interface (APIs). This would allow Google Maps and other mobile applications to include bus schedules in their trip planning features. This has already been done for many routes in British Columbia.

Appendix J: Funding Opportunities

Funding Opportunity	Overview of funding	Eligibility	Available Funding	More Information	Contact Details	Additional Notes
Canada-British Columbia: Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program Rural and Northern Communities	Funds capital infrastructure projects, including those improving public transit in small and rural communities. Projects must include physical construction of infrastructure.	Municipal Governments; Indigenous recipients (both on and off reserve). Partnerships between recipients (e.g. Indigenous recipient and municipality) are permitted with a partnership agreement or MOU.	Cost-sharing: Covers up to 90% of projects through municipal governments; 100% for Indigenous recipients off-reserve; and 75% for Indigenous recipients on-reserve		Phone: 250-387-406 Email: infra@gov.bc.ca	
Jordan's Principle Funding	Requests can be sent by parents or guardians for specific children or community/service providers for multiple children to meet 'unmet needs of First Nations children.' Previous funded requests have included transportation to appointments; specialized school transportation, etc.		Program wants to move towards an innovation fund could be a potential funding source for addressing on-reserve/off-reserve gaps		Email: aadnc.bcjp.aandc@canada.ca	May be too specialized to apply to a general transit system, but worth exploring further
Community Gaming Grants	Funding for organizations providing services with direct benefit to community. Fundings for a community transportation strategy could potentially fit into the following streams of application: Human and Social Services, Sport, and/or Public Safety.	Not for profit organizations	Local organizations up to \$100,000; regional organizations up to \$250,000	Link to 2019 Application Guidebook: https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/sports-recreation-arts-and-culture/gambling/grants/guide-cgg.pdf	Email: CommunityGamingGrants@gov.bc.ca	
Northern Health Imagine Grants	Funding for community based initiatives that focus on health of communities		Up to \$5000		Phone: 250-565-2131 Email: Imagine.grants@northernhealth.ca	

Funding Opportunities

Funding Opportunity	Overview of funding	Eligibility	Available Funding	More Information	Contact Details	Additional Notes
Federation of Canadian Municipalities Green Municipal Fund	Their transportation-related funding falls within three streams: pilot projects, capital projects, and feasibility studies. All projects must focus on minimizing greenhouse gas emissions.	Municipalities, but can apply with project partners, including Indigenous communities and not for profit organizations	Capital projects: low interest loans up to \$5 million and grant up to 15% of this amount Pilot projects: up to \$350,000 to 50% of cost Feasibility studies, up to \$150,000 to 50% of costs	Website: programs@fcm.ca	General contact: info@fcm.ca	
New Relationship Trust	Direct support funding for capacity-building initiatives, governance, and economic development. Streams for both individual bands and collaborative efforts. Several Upper Skeena bands have received funding through this organization.	First Nations communities	A maximum of \$25,000 per project is available to individual First Nations. A maximum of \$50,000 per project is available to groups of three First Nations who are collaborating on a capacity building initiative.		Phone: 604.925.3338 / Email: admin@nrtf.ca	
Telus Community Grants	Funding for projects that meet one of these goals: focus on enabling youth to succeed; aligns with their interest in health and education; demonstrates technological innovation in program delivery; defines and measures social outcomes	Must be a registered Canadian charity or qualified donee. Funding for capital investments must directly support youth and involve technology and/or social innovation.	The maximum investment our international Community Boards will consider is \$5,000, with a maximum of two per year funded at \$10,000.	Next call for funding will be in May 2019 Website: http://www.newrelationshiptrust.ca/funding/direct-support/	Contact: Marie Alaimo Senior Project Officer New Relationship Trust malaimo@nrtf.ca	Unclear if only available to apply in these BC areas (where there are community grant boards): Victoria Vancouver Thompson Okanagan

Funding Opportunities

Funding Opportunity	Overview of funding	Eligibility	Available Funding	More Information	Contact Details	Additional Notes
New Horizons for Seniors Program: Community-based projects	Organizations that want to help seniors make a difference in the lives of others and in their communities are eligible to receive federal grants and contributions funding.	Projects must be led or inspired by seniors and promote volunteerism, expand awareness of elder abuse, engage seniors in mentoring of others, or support social participation and inclusion of seniors.	Community-based projects are eligible to receive up to \$25,000 per year, per organization, in grant funding or a small grant of a maximum of \$5,000.	Website: https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/new-horizons-seniors.html	Phone: 1-800-277-9914 (select "0" to speak with an agent)	
FCM Green Municipal Fund*	Funding available for pilot projects that assess technology or other solutions in real-life conditions under two categories: Reduce Fossil Fuel Use in Fleets; Transportation Networks and Commuting Options.	All Canadian municipal governments and their project partners, which includes private sector groups, Indigenous communities, municipally owned corporations, a regional, provincial or territorial organization delivering municipal services, not-for-profit organizations.	Offers up to \$350,000 to cover up to 50% of eligible costs	Examples of pilots: Purchasing properly sized municipal vehicles for various uses; Alternative fueling infrastructure for vehicles providing municipal services; Fuel switching, alternative fuels and technologies to reduce fuel consumption	Email: programs@fcm.ca Website for transportation networks and commuting options: https://fcm.ca/en/funding/gmf/pilot-project-transportation-networks-commuting-options	*likely would have to be applied for and used only on vehicles owned/operated by one of the municipalities
UBCM Age-Friendly Communities	The Age-friendly Communities program assists communities in BC to support aging populations by developing and implementing policies and plans, undertaking projects that enable seniors to age in place and facilitating the creation of age-friendly communities.	All local governments (municipalities and regional districts) in BC are eligible to apply for Stream 1 or Stream 2 funding. Health authorities will identify one First Nation in each health authority region to apply for Stream 1 funding (2018)	Stream 1 can contribute a maximum of 100% of the cost of eligible activities – to a maximum of \$25,000. Stream 2 can contribute a maximum of 100% of the cost of eligible activities – to a maximum of \$15,000.	Website: https://www.ubcm.ca/assets/Funding~Programs/LGPS/SHSI/afc-2019-program-guide.pdf	Local Government Program Services: Phone: (250) 952-9177 Email: lgps@ubcm.ca BC Healthy Communities (Sarah Ravlic, Program Coordinator) Phone: 250 590-1845 Email: sarah@bchealthycommunities.ca	This information was for the 2019 application which has now passed. Unclear if the First Nations pilot program will continue.



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